



EDEN IAS

NEWS

IMPULSE

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

SOURCE - THE HINDU
GS PAPER- 3

CONTEXT - Every year International Day of Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons is celebrated on September 26.

ABOUT-

- The International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (or Nuclear Abolition Day) is held every year on September 26 since 2014.
- The day was declared by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in 2013.
- The aims of the day is to enhance public awareness about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination.
- On this day, countries around the world are encouraged to reaffirm their commitment to nuclear disarmament.
- There are currently 14,000 nuclear weapons in the world. The nine countries that possess nuclear weapons include:
 - Russia
 - United States
 - France
 - China
 - United Kingdom
 - Pakistan
 - India
 - Israel
 - North Korea
- Russia has the most nuclear warheads with 6,850. The United States is close behind with 6,550.
- **Aim:** Achieving global nuclear disarmament is one of the oldest goals of the United Nations. It was the subject of the General Assembly's first resolution in 1946, which established the Atomic Energy Commission, which was dissolved in 1952, with a mandate to make specific proposals for the control of nuclear energy and the elimination of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction.

The United Nations has been at the forefront of many major diplomatic efforts to advance nuclear disarmament since.

RAISE 2020

SOURCE - THE HINDU
GS PAPER - 2

CONTEXT - The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (**MeitY**) and **NITI Aayog** will organize a summit on Artificial Intelligence (AI), **RAISE 2020- 'Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020'** from October 5-9, 2020.

HIGHLIGHTS

- RAISE 2020 will be a global meeting of minds to exchange ideas and chart a course for using AI for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment in areas like Healthcare, Agriculture, Education and Smart Mobility, among other sectors
- At the RAISE 2020 Summit, delegates and experts in research, policy and innovation on Artificial Intelligence will join from across the globe.
- The RAISE 2020 Summit will also feature some of the most exciting startups working in Artificial Intelligence-related fields.
- The Summit will explore in-depth, the role of AI in accelerating social empowerment.
- AI has the power to solve many societal challenges and be an enabler for inclusion, there is a need to promote and identify such innovative solution.
- The AI Solution Challenge will be organized in the following categories:
 1. AI solutions for Healthcare
 2. AI Solutions for Education
 3. AI Solutions for Agriculture
 4. AI Solutions for Natural Language Processing
 5. AI Solutions for Smart Mobility and Transportation
 6. Others

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SWACHH VIDYALAYA ABHIYAN

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 2

Context - Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) recently submitted a report on the performance of this program.

About - Swachh Vidyalaya is the national campaign driving 'Clean India: Clean Schools'.

A key feature of the campaign is to ensure that every school in India has a set of functioning and well maintained water, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

Water, sanitation and hygiene in schools refers to a combination of technical and human development components that are necessary to produce a healthy school environment and to develop or support appropriate health and hygiene behaviours. The technical components include drinking water, handwashing, toilet and soap facilities in the school compound for use by children and teachers.

The human development components are the activities that promote conditions within the school and the practices of children that help to prevent water, hygiene and sanitation related diseases.

Aim: to meet the Right to Education Act's mandate that all schools must have separate toilets for boys and girls.

Central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) were roped in to implement the program.

Launched in 2014 by the then Ministry of Human Resource Development (now Ministry of Education).

DOMESTIC SYSTEMICALLY IMPORTANT INSURERS (D-SIIs)

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 3

CONTEXT - The regulator's move has come ahead of the government plan to list the shares of LIC on the stock exchanges through an initial public offering (IPO) next year. GIC Re and New India are already listed on the exchanges.

KEY FACTS -

The insurance regulator said Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) refer to insurers of such size, market importance and domestic and global interconnectedness whose distress or failure would cause a significant dislocation in the domestic financial system.

The continued functioning of D-SIIs is critical for the uninterrupted availability of insurance services to the national economy.

D-SIIs are perceived as insurers that are 'too big or too important to fail'. In order to identify such insurers and to put such insurers to enhanced monitoring mechanism, IRDAI developed a methodology for identification and supervision of D-SIIs.

The parameters, as per the methodology for identification of D-SIIs include the size of operations in terms of total revenue, including premium underwritten and the value of assets under management, global activities across more than one jurisdiction, lack of substitutability of their products and/or operations and interconnectivity through counterparty exposure and macro-economic exposure.

These parameters were assigned weights to cover various aspects of their operations.

The Authority would identify D-SIIs on an annual basis and disclose the names of these insurers for public information. D-SIIs will also be subjected to enhanced regulatory supervision.

INDIA STILL FAR FROM HERD IMMUNITY

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 2 and 3

CONTEXT- Indian Council of Medical Research's (ICMR) [COVID-19](#) first sero-survey should not create a sense of complacency in people with regard to the virus. Speaking in his social media interaction Sunday Samvaad-3, Mr. Vardhan said indications from the upcoming second sero survey "are that India is far from having achieved any kind of herd immunity which necessitates that all of us should continue following COVID appropriate behaviour.

WHAT IS HERD IMMUNITY ?

Herd immunity is when a large number of people are vaccinated against a disease, lowering the chances of others being infected by it. When a sufficient percentage of a population is vaccinated, it slows the spread of disease. It is also referred to as community immunity or herd protection.

Herd protection of the unvaccinated occurs when a sufficient proportion of the group is immune.

The decline of disease incidence is greater than the pro-

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portion of individuals immunized because vaccination reduces the spread of an infectious agent by reducing the amount and/or duration of pathogen shedding by vaccines, retarding transmission.

However, this type of immunity is usually viewed as a preventive strategy in vaccination programmes.

Since, we don't have a vaccine for COVID-19 – achieving herd immunity would require a significant proportion of the population to be infected and recover from COVID-19.

This will allow us to retain an immunological memory of the disease that enables us to fight off that same disease in the future.

NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION

SOURCE – THE HINDU

GS PAPER- 2

CONTEXT -The National Medical Commission (NMC) has replaced the Medical Council of India (BoG-MCI), as per information released by the Health Ministry on Friday.

KEY FACTS

The Union government has set up the National Medical Commission (NMC) along with four other autonomous boards while abolishing the MCI.

The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Medical Education Boards, Medical Assessment and Rating Board, and Ethics and Medical Registration Board have been constituted to help the NMC in day-to-day functioning.

the new commission will have a chairperson, 10 ex-officio members, and 22 part-time members. The reforms are aimed to steer the country's medical education towards a transparent, qualitative and accountable system.

The basic change is that the regulator is now <selected> on merit, as opposed to an <elected> regulator.

The Centre has notified **the 33-member NMC**, which will be chaired for three years by Suresh Chandra Sharma

HEALTH IN INDIA REPORT

SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS

GS PAPER – 2

CONTEXT - The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the report of a survey titled 'Health in India', whose main objective was to gather basic quantitative information on India's health sector.

KEY FACTS –

- The report details aspects of the role played by government and private sector facilities, and also contains health information for separate religious communities, including estimates of their susceptibility to ailments.
- The report has highlighted on the health of religious communities across country.
- The Zoroastrian community remains the most susceptible to ailments, the report says.
- Results from the National Sample Survey (NSS)'s 75th Round released in July show that 31.1 per cent of Zoroastrians reported that they were suffering from an ailment at the time the survey was conducted.
- The report highlights that around 7.5% of Indians suffered from ailments.
- 6.8% suffered from ailments in the rural area while in Urban area, the numbers were high at 9.1%.
- The percentage of sick people other communities are
 - Jains: 11.2%
 - Sikhs: 11%
 - Christians: 10.5%
 - Muslims: 8.1%
 - Buddhists: 8%
 - Hindus: 7.2%
- Report states that, women were more susceptible to suffering than men.
- Around 6.1% of males were suffering from ailments in rural area while percentage of women in rural area was 7.6%. On the other hand, In urban areas, 8.2% of males and 10% of females were sick of ailments.
- Thus, number of females suffered from ailments were high as compared to male in both the urban and rural area.
- The survey defines ailment as a deviation faced by the person in his or her physical well being

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SAATHI APPLICATION

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 3

CONTEXT - Recently, the **Ministry of Tourism** has launched the **SAATHI Application** on the occasion of **World Tourism Day**.

KEY FACTS

- It is a **System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for Hospitality Industry**.
- It is a **certification programme** of the **Ministry of Tourism** with **Quality Council of India**.
- It aims to assist the hospitality industry to continue to **operate safely** and thereby **instill confidence** among the Staff, employees and the guests about the safety of the hotel/unit.
- The Certification will have three components i.e. **Self-Certification (Initial stage)**; **Capacity Building (Training in terms of SOPs and Guidelines)**, and finally the **Third party Assessment (Certification)**.

- The Real Time data collection Program "Mapping of Nutrition and Health Status" was also launched. This will collect data on dietary intake through crowd sourcing approach
- The portal provides useful and important information related to vaccine development, ongoing clinical trials and progress made in this area locally and globally at regular intervals
- The web portal will be strengthened with data available for all the vaccines used to prevent various diseases.
- **ICMR-NIN web portal** - It is a first of its kind web portal that was launched. It has been developed to collect data which will be useful in the present complications created by COVID-19 pandemic.

National Clinical Registry for COVID-19

National Clinical Registry for COVID-19 was launched by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi. The registry is aimed at collecting good quality real time clinical data in order to inform evidence-based clinical practice, research, formulating guidelines and policy.

VACCINE PORTAL FOR COVID 19

SOURCE - LIVE MINT

GS PAPER - 2 AND 3

CONTEXT - Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the vaccine portal for Covid-19 on September 28, 2020 in order to create awareness among masses.

KEY FACTS

- The online portal available on the ICMR site, will be a repository for all information related to Covid vaccine development
- Everyone will be able to go online to that portal and look-up all contemporary research-development and clinical trials related information about such vaccinations
- Everyone will be able to go online to that portal a look-up all contemporary research-development and clinical trials related information about such vaccinations
- The Health Minister also launched the Indian Council of Medical research (ICMR) history timeline depicting 108 year journey of the Council

AMBEDKAR SOCIAL INNOVATION & INCUBATION MISSION UNDER VENTURE CAPITAL FUND FOR SCs(ASIIM)

Source -PIB

GS PAPER -1,2

Context - Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Shri ThaawarchandGehlote-launched the "Ambedkar Social Innovation and Incubation Mission (ASIIM) under Venture Capital Fund for SCs"through Video Conferencing here today with a view to promoting innovation and enterprise among SC students studying in higher educational institutions

KEY FACTS

- Ministry of Social Justice had launched the Venture Capital Fund for SCs (VCF-SC) in 2014-15 with a view to developing entrepreneurship amongst the SC/Divyang youth and to enable them to become 'job-givers'.
- The Objective of this fund is to provide concessional finance to the entities of the SC entrepreneurs.

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- Under this fund, 117 companies promoted by SC entrepreneurs have been sanctioned financial assistance to set up business ventures.
- 1,000 SC youth would be identified in the next 4 years with start-up ideas through the Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) in various higher educational institutions.
- They will be funded @ Rs. 30 lakhs in 3 years as equity funding so that they can translate their start-up ideas into commercial ventures.
- Ministry has decided to launch ASIIM through the Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes (VCFSC).
- It's objectives include: To promote entrepreneurship among the SC Youth with special preference to Divyangs; To support (1,000) innovative ideas till 2024 through a synergetic work with the Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) set up by Department of Science and Technology; To support, promote, hand-hold the start-up ideas till they reach commercial stage by providing liberal equity support; and To incentivise students with innovative mind-set to take to entrepreneurship with confidence.
- More than 3000 overseas Indian origin academicians and scientists from 55 countries and more than 10,000 resident academicians and scientists are taking part in the summit.
- The goal is to create an ecosystem of Knowledge and Innovation in the country through global outreach

CHARDHAM PROJECT

Source – The Hindu

GS Paper – 2 and 3

Context - A Supreme Court-appointed expert committee has alleged violations of the court orders in the execution of **the Chardham road project**.

Key facts

The Supreme Court had ruled that width of roads constructed under Chardham project shall be 5.5 metres. This was ruled based on the recommendation of Ministry of Road Transport and Highway (MoRTH) for mountain roads.

To the contrary, the GoI had sanctioned road width of 10-12 metres. The MoRTH has allowed the 700 km road project to continue with 10-metre width. This according to the Committee is a contravention of the SC

VAIBHAV SUMMIT

Source – PIB

GS PAPER – 3

Context - PM to inaugurate VAIBHAV Summit on 2nd October

Key facts –

- The VAIBHAV Summit is a global virtual summit of overseas and resident Indian Researchers and Academicians, and is being organized from 2nd October to 31st October 2020.
- Vaishwik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Summit is a collaborative initiative by S&T and Academic Organisations of India to enable deliberations on thought process, practices and R&D culture with a problem solving approach for well defined objectives
- The aim of summit is to reflect in-depth on the collaboration and cooperation instruments with academia and scientists in India
- The initiative involves multiple levels of interactions among overseas experts and Indian counterparts over a month-long series of webinars, video conferences etc.
- The Char Dham programme is an initiative to improve connectivity to the Char Dham pilgrimage centres in the Himalayas namely **Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath**.
- These four ancient pilgrimages sites in Uttarakhand **are known as Chota Char Dham to differentiate them from** the bigger circuit of modern day **Char Dham sites namely Badrinath, Dwarka, Puri and Rameswaram**.
- The works under Char Dham Pariyojna are being implemented on **Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) mode** of contract.
- These projects are being implemented by three executing agencies of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, viz,
 - A. Uttarakhand State PWD,
 - B. Border Road Organization(BRO) and
 - C. National Highway & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL).

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GOL APPOINTS MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Source - LIVEMINT

GS Paper - 3

Context - the Government of India appointed economists Jayant R Varma, Shashank Bhide and Ashima Goyal as members of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), headed by the prime minister, approved the names,

Highlights

- As per the RBI Act, the three new members would have four-year terms.
- As per the RBI Act, the external members can hold office for a period of four years and are not eligible for re-appointment.
- The other ex-officio members of the MPC are Reserve Bank Governor, Deputy Governor (in-charge of monetary policy) and one RBI officer to be appointed by the central board.
- The MPC has been given the mandate to maintain annual inflation at 4 per cent until March 31, 2021, with an upper tolerance of 6 per cent and a lower tolerance of 2 per cent.
- The external members of the MPC are appointed by the central government from amongst persons of ability, integrity and standing, having knowledge and experience in the field of economics, banking, finance or monetary policy

What is MPC ?

The RBI has a **government-constituted Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** which is tasked with framing monetary policy using tools like the repo rate, reverse repo rate, bank rate, cash reserve ratio (CRR). It has been instituted by the Central Government of India under **Section 45ZB of the RBI Act that was amended in 1934**. Decisions will be **taken by majority vote with each member having a vote**. **RBI governor's role:** The RBI Governor will chair the committee. The governor, however, will not enjoy a veto power to overrule the other panel members, but will have a casting vote in case of a tie.

PM SVANIDHI SCHEME

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 2 AND 3

CONTEXT - Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs signed Memorandum of Understanding with Swiggy to take street food vendors online. This was achieved under PM Svanidhi Scheme.

ABOUT THE SCHEME

- **PM SVANIDHI scheme launched by the central government aims at enabling the street vendors to resume their livelihood which has been adversely affected due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown by the government.**
- Micro-credit facility scheme will provide affordable loans to street vendors.
- The scheme was launched by the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry
- Through this scheme, the government will recognize the significant role of the street vendors at making goods and services available at the doorstep.
- The launched scheme will benefit over 50 lakh vendors who have been vending on or before March 24, 2020, in urban areas. The duration of the scheme will be until March 2022.
- The vendors will be able to avail of a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which will be repayable in monthly installments in the tenure of one year.
- On early or timely repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy at the rate of 7% per annum will be credited to the beneficiary's bank account through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) on six-month basis.

GANGA RIVER DOLPHIN DAY

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper - 3

Context - India celebrates **October 5** every year as the <Ganga River Dolphin Day> as this day Ganga Dolphins were declared national aquatic animals in 2010.

Highlights

- The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) launched a Dolphin-based ecotourism program,

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including Dolphin safari, at six sites in three states – Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal -- along the country's national river on the occasion of the 'Ganga River Dolphin Day' on Monday.

- The Ganga Praharis- trained volunteers from among the local community working for cleanliness of Ganga - will take the tourists at these sites on boat rides to view Dolphin in the Ganga river.
- **A collaborative effort by Uttar Pradesh Forest Department and WWF-India supported by National Mission for Clean Ganga**
- **Uttar Pradesh becomes the first state to conduct the Dolphin Census using a unified methodology for the second time**

DIGITAL SEVA SETU APP

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper - 2 and 3

Context – OGujarat Government has announced Digital Seva Setu Programme for the rural areas

Highlights

- Under this programme, the citizens will be able to get benefit from various public welfare services at the Panchayat level.
- Initiated under the Bharat Net Project- an initiative to connect the Village Panchayats through fibre network.
- The villages of Gujarat will be connected with a 100 MBPS optical fibre network under the Digital Seva Setu programme.
- The Phase-1 will cover 2,000 Village Panchayats. About 20 types of pro-people services will be provided at the village panchayat level.
- Citizens in rural areas will be able to get the benefits of this programme by paying a nominal fee of Rs. 20.
- The citizens can get various documents like duplicate ration card, income certificate, senior citizen certificate, caste certificate at their doorstep under this programme.
- The government will also provide powers of affidavit to the Talati Mantri at the Village Panchayat level so that people in rural areas do not have to visit the notary offices in towns and cities.

PARAM SIDHI AI

Source - The economic times

GS Paper - 3

Context - the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) commissioned the largest HPC-AI super-computer. HPC-AI is High Performance Computing and Artificial Intelligence

Highlights -

- This initiative will put India among the top countries in global AI supercomputing research and innovation
- PARAM Siddhi – AI, a large-scale HPC-AI scalable infrastructure will be established under NSM at C-DAC, with support from NitiAayog, Ministry of Electronics and IT, Department of Science and Technology, and the central government.
- It will use NVIDIA Next Generation technology, C-DAC software stack and Cloud platform.

BENEFITS -

1. It will play a pivotal role in developing a vibrant ecosystem for research and innovation in science and engineering.
2. With three decades of expertise in AI and augmenting the AI and Language Computing Mission Mode Program of C-DAC, this infrastructure will accelerate experiments and outcomes for India specific grand challenge problems in Health Care, Education, Energy, Cyber Security, Space, Automotive and Agriculture.
3. It will catalyze partnerships with the Academia, Industry, MSMEs and Start-ups

CABINET APPROVES CYBER SECURITY AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper - 2 and 3

Context - The union cabinet approved signing of an agreement with Japan that is aimed at enhancing cooperation in emerging technologies, protection of critical infrastructure, cyberspace and to mitigate threats to communication networks.

Highlights

- The approval to the pact by the cabinet comes in the midst of growing concerns over cyber attacks from

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China, particularly after India banned over 100 mobile apps with Chinese links.

- It will enhance cooperation in the area of cyberspace and emerging technologies and provide for protection of critical infrastructure and sharing of information on cyber security threats and malicious cyber activities as well as on best practices to counter them.
- The pact will also provide for sharing strategies and best practices to promote the integrity of the supply chain of information and communication technology (ICT) products
- It will also strengthen the security of ICT infrastructure through government-to-government and business-to-business cooperation

14 MILLION TONNES OF MICROPLASTICS ON SEA FLOOR STUDY

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 1 & 3

CONTEXT - Researchers at the agency, known as CSIRO, used a robotic submarine to collect samples from sites up to 3,000 metres deep, off the South Australian coast

Highlights

- The world's sea floor is littered with an estimated 14 million tonnes of microplastics, broken down from the masses of rubbish entering the oceans every year, according to Australia's national science agency.
- The quantity of the tiny pollutants was 25 times greater than previous localised studies had shown, the agency said, calling it the first global estimate of sea-floor microplastics.
- Researchers at the agency, known as CSIRO, used a robotic submarine to collect samples from sites up to 3,000 metres deep, off the South Australian coast
- The scientists, who published their findings in peer-reviewed journal **Frontiers in Marine Science**, said areas with more floating rubbish generally had more microplastic fragments on the sea floor

What is Microplastic ?

Plastic pollution that ends up in the ocean deteriorates and breaks down, ending up as microplastics. The results show microplastics are indeed sinking to the ocean floor.

Conclusion

Government, industry and the community need to work together to significantly reduce the amount of litter we see along our beaches and in our oceans

PURCHASE MANAGER INDEX

Source - Indian express

GS Paper - 3

Context - Higher demand accelerated India's manufacturing sector growth in September

What is purchase manager index ?

- The Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) is a measure of the prevailing direction of economic trends in manufacturing.
- The PMI is based on a monthly survey of supply chain managers across 19 industries, covering both upstream and downstream activity
- PMI is **an indicator of business activity**- in the manufacturing and services sectors

The PMI is usually **released at the start of every month**. It is, therefore, considered a **good leading indicator** of economic activity

CSIR-CMERI TRANSFERS TECHNOLOGY OF COMMUNITY LEVEL WATER PURIFICATION SYSTEM

SOURCE - PIB

GS PAPER - 1 and 3

Context - The CSIR-CMERI transferred its High Flow Rate Fluoride & Iron Removal technology to M/s Capricans Aqua Private Limited, Howrah, West Bengal, in Durgapur (WB)

Highlights

- Community Level Water Purification System has a Flow-Rate capacity of 10,000 Ltr/hr and uses commonly available raw materials such as sand, gravel and adsorbent materials.
- It comprises a three-stage purification process which purifies water within permissible limits (1.5 ppm & 0.3 ppm for Fluoride and Iron respectively).
- The technology uses a combination of Oxidation, Gravitational Settling and Chemisorption process in an Affordable Package.

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- The integrated backwashing profile of the technology will help in improving the shelf-life of the filtration media in a resource rationalised manner

ADVANTAGES

- CSIR-CMERI Water Technologies have provided an Affordable and Cost-Effective solution for serving the most vulnerable sections of the Nation
- The results generated after deployment of this Water Technologies will be immense.
- Capricans now intends to deploy the CMERI Water technologies in the Fluoride and Iron affected regions of the states of Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Assam

HIGHLIGHTS

- Campaign was launched due to upcoming festivals , winter season as well as opening up of economy.
- Concerted Action Plan will also be implemented by Central Government Ministries and Departments and State Governments and Union Territories with Region-specific targeted communication in high case-load district
- The campaign involves wall painting, putting up hoardings, electronic display boards in government premises and involvement of national and local influencers in social media, running mobile vans, generation of audio messages, brochures and Pamphlets.
- It will include region specific targeted communication through simple and easily understandable messages in every high caseload districts.
- The aim is to reach the message to every citizen in the country.

FINANCE COMPANIES CANNOT BE SET UP WITH FDI FROM MOURITIUS

SOURCE - Economic times

GS PAPER - 3

Context - The Reserve Bank of India recently said that companies cannot set up Foreign Direct Investment from Mauritius, as they do not comply with norms set by FATF.

Highlights

The Reserve Bank banned the FDI from Mauritius due to the following reasons

- To prevent round tripping. Round tripping is common in countries that enjoys tax havens (such as Mauritius). Here, the companies from home country take the route of foreign investment to enjoy tax havens. In other words, shell companies are created in foreign lands.
- To curb Chinese Investments. Several Chinese companies are using Mauritius to enter Indian market at reduced cost
- Mauritius was listed in grey list of FATF

JAGANANNA VIDYA KANUKA SCHEME

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper -2

Context - Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy launched 'Jagananna VidyaKanuka' programme at Punadipadu ZP High School in Kankipadumandal of the district.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SCHEME

- Under the scheme, the government will distribute VidyaKanuka kits to all students of Classes I to X.
- The kits will contain three pairs of uniform, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, a belt, one set of textbooks and notebooks and one school bag.
- Meanwhile, under the Nadu-Nedu programme 1,153 of the total 3,105 schools in the district are being developed with ₹230 crore in the first phase.

JAN ANDOLAN

SOURCE -AIR

GS PAPER -2 and 3

Context - PM Modi launches Jan Andolan campaign on COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour; Urges people to wear mask, wash hands & follow social distancing

RUDRAM - 1

Source - Indian Express

GS Paper - 3

Context - The New Generation Anti-Radiation Missile (Rudram-1) which is India's first indigenous anti-radiation missile developed by DRDO for Indian Air Force was tested successfully

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Highlights

- missile has been designed to be launched from various fighter aircraft currently in the inventory of the Indian Air Force
- DRDO scientists said that the missile has been designed to further enhance the Suppression of Enemy Air Defence (SEAD) capability of the IAF.
- Anti Radiation Missiles are primarily designed to track and neutralise the radar and communication assets of the adversary
- Equipped with state of art radiation tracking and guidance system, the missile system has undergone preliminary tests in the past with the help of an operational fighter squadron of the Indian Air Force

SVAMITVA SCHEME

Source - Live mint

GS Paper -2

Context - Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday launched the physical distribution of property cards under the SWAMITVA (ownership) scheme via videoconferencing.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The 'historic' move will pave the way for villagers to use the property as a financial asset for taking loans and other financial benefits.
- This will also enable around one lakh property holders to download their property cards through an SMS link sent on their mobile phones, and this would be followed by the physical distribution of property cards by the respective state governments.
- These beneficiaries are from 763 villages across six states -- 346 from Uttar Pradesh, 221 from Haryana, 100 from Maharashtra, 44 from Madhya Pradesh, 50 from Uttarakhand, and two from Karnataka
- Maharashtra has a system of recovering a nominal cost of property cards so it will take a month's time
- this is the first time ever that such a large-scale exercise involving the most modern means of technology, is being carried out to benefit millions of rural property owners

What is Swamitva scheme

SVAMITVA, a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, which was launched by PM Modi on National Panchayati Raj Day, 24th April 2020. The scheme aims to provide the 'record of rights' to village household owners in rural areas and issue Property Cards.

GRADED RESPONSE ACTION PLAN

Source - Indian Express

GS Paper - 3

Context - Starting October 15, some stricter measures to fight air pollution will come into force in Delhi and its neighbouring National Capital Region (NCR) towns, as part of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). The action plan has been in effect for three years in Delhi and NCR

HIGHLIGHTS

- diesel generator sets can no longer be used in Delhi and the NCR towns of Noida, Ghaziabad, Greater Noida, Faridabad, and Gurgaon. Can be used only for emergency.
- Pollution control authorities will begin night patrolling to check for dust and industrial emissions, as well as the burning of waste. Mechanised sweeping and frequent sprinkling of water on roads (to make the dust settle) have been directed.

GRADED RESPONSE ACTION PLAN

The Graded Response Action Plan are institutional measures that are to be adopted when the air quality deteriorates. It is an emergency measure. It was prepared by Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority. It aims to prevent Particulate Matter PM 10 and PM 2.5 go beyond "moderate" Air Quality Index.

GOA BECOMES FIRST TO PROVIDE TAP WATER CONNECTION IN RURAL AREAS UNDER JAL JE-EVAN MISSION

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper - 2 and 3

Context - Goa has become the first 'HarGhar Jal' state in the country by providing 100% tap water connections in rural areas covering 2.30 lakh households, the Jal Shakti Ministry

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HIGHLIGHTS

- The government's Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide piped water to all rural households by 2024
- Harnessing the immense benefits of efficiently utilising the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) which aims to improve the quality of life and bring 'ease-of-living' to rural communities
- Two districts -- North Goa with 1.65 lakh rural households and South Goa with 98,000 rural households in 191 gram panchayats -- are fully saturated with assured piped water supply through tap connections
- To strengthen water testing facilities, the state is in process of getting 14 water quality testing laboratories accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL).
- Jal Jeevan Mission mandates training five persons in every village, especially women, in using field test kits so that water can be tested there.
- "Having achieved the universal access, the state now plans for sensor-based service delivery monitoring system so as to monitor the functionality of water supply i.e. potable water in adequate quantity and of prescribed quality being provided to every rural household on regular and long-term basis

MUKHYA MANTRI SAUR SWAROJGAR YOJANA

Source - PIB

GS PAPER - 2 AND 3

Context - Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat launched the MukhyaMantri Saur SwarojgarYojana for self-employment by solar energy farming at the Veer Chandra Singh Garhwali auditorium in Dehradun.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The aim of the scheme is to promote the production of green energy and to provide self-employment opportunities to the youth of the State and returning migrants.
- Each beneficiary of this scheme will be allocated solar plants of 25 kilowatts and 10,000 people will get self-employment under this scheme
- With the installation of solar panels for integrated

farming, fruits, vegetables and herbs can be produced on the same land.

- Seeds of climate-based medicinal and spongy plants will be provided free of cost on the land to be set up.
- To achieve this goal, year-wise and district-wise targets are being decided in collaboration with MSMEs.
- Permissible grants and benefits will be available for MSME's Mukhyamantri SwarozgarYojana.
- There will be no educational qualification for this.
- beneficiaries can take a loan from private or national banks. Private banks will give loans for the scheme for a period of eight years at an interest rate of eight per cent.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS

Source - The Times of India

GS Paper - 3

Context - India has launched a national action plan for the conservation of migratory birds along with the Central Asian Flyway, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

What is the National action plan for the conservation of migratory birds?

- The plan was launched to be implemented between 2018 and 2023. The overall goal of the plan is to reduce the population decline of migratory birds and to secure their habitat. The short-term goal of the plan is to stop the decline in population by 2027.
- The plan is to be implemented by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change. A status report of the plan implementation is to be published by the Ministry every two years.
- The plan aims to conserve the migratory birds and their habitats within the agenda of Sustainable Development Goals.

Objectives

- Reduce pressure on critical habitat
- Avoid threat to habitats
- Stop declining of migratory birds
- Improve database

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

LONG TERM REPO OPERATION (TLTRO)

Source – The Hindu

GS Paper – 3

Context - The non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) said the decision to keep the key repo rate -- at which the RBI lends short term money to banks -- unchanged was on expected lines and in consideration with keeping the inflation target while supporting growth

Highlights

- The Reserve Bank's decision to enhance liquidity into the system through long-term repo operations will ease the borrowing cost for NBFCs and relaxation in loan to value guideline will help revive the economy, the industry
- the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted unanimously to retain repo at 4 per cent while keeping its policy stance accommodative and suggested more measures going ahead to support the economy.
- Under the targeted long-term repo operations (TLTROs) measures, the Reserve Bank of India will conduct on-tap TLTRO with tenors of up to three years for a total amount of up to Rs 1 lakh crore at a floating rate linked to the policy repo rate.

What is Long term repo operation

The LTRO is a tool under which the central bank provides one-year to three-year money to banks at the prevailing repo rate, accepting government securities with matching or higher tenure as the collateral.

2+2 TALKS

Source – The Hindu

GS Paper – 2

Context - In the run-up to the U.S.- India 2+2 foreign and defense ministers' meeting this year, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun is scheduled to visit New Delhi from October 12 -14.

2 + 2 talks

It is a format of dialogue where the defense and foreign ministers or secretaries meet with their counterparts from another country.

India holds such talks with Japan and Australia, at the foreign secretary and defense secretary level.

India holds ministerial-level talks only with the US. Apart from India, the United States holds such ministerial dialogues with Australia and Japan also.

The talks were announced when Prime Minister Narendra Modi met US President Donald Trump in June 2017. The "2+2" dialogue has replaced the Strategic and Commercial Dialogue between the foreign and commerce ministers of the two countries that were held during the previous Obama administration

INDIA ENERGY MODELLING FORUM

Source – PIB

GS Paper -3

Context - Further to the constitution of the India Energy Modelling Forum (IEMF)—jointly launched by NITI Aayog and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the US-India Strategic Energy Partnership—on 2 July, NITI Aayog announced its governing structure

About

- It is the Part of the Sustainable Growth pillar of the US-India Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP), IEMF aims to engage Indian researchers, knowledge partners, think tanks and national and international government agencies and departments for modelling and long-term energy planning.
- The governing structure of IEMF will consist of an inter-ministerial and a steering committee. The inter-ministerial committee will be convened by NITI Aayog and headed by its CEO, and comprise senior officials from the ministries of petroleum and natural gas; power; new and renewable energy; coal; environment, forest and climate change; and department of science and technology. This committee will review the studies/modelling activities and provide directions and new areas of research
- This committee will shortlist policy issues to be taken up for study and might form various taskforces depending on the specific studies/modelling exercises to be carried out. The convener of this committee will be selected on a rotational basis for two years and will act as the interface between the inter-ministerial and steering committees and the working groups/taskforces. Prayas Group, Pune, will be the first convener of the steering committee.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

KERALA STATE FIRST TO GO DIGITAL IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Source – The Hindu

GS Paper – 2 and 3

Context - Kerala has become the first State to have high-tech classrooms in all its public schools.

About –

- These were implemented in the State as part of the Public Education Rejuvenation Mission.
- Over 3.74 lakh digital equipments were distributed in 16,027 schools for the smart classroom project.
- High-tech labs were started in 11,275 primary and upper primary schools for classes 1 to 7
- The high-tech classroom project is being implemented by Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KITE) with financial assistance from Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KIIFB).
- MP and MLA funds besides that of local self-government institutions were also utilised for set up the classrooms, expected to be a significant milestone in the area of education

KAMDHENU DEEPAWALI ABHI

Source – PIB

GS PAPER – 3

CONTEXT - Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog begins nationwide campaign to celebrate “Kamdhenu Deepawali Abhiyan” - Promoting extensive use of cow-dung/ Panchgavya products this Diwali Festival.

About

- The RKA is promoting extensive use of cow-dung/ Panchgavya products during this Diwali Festival. Manufacture of Cow dung based Diyas, Candles, Dhoo, Agarbatti, Shubh-Labh, Swastik, Samrani, Hardboard, Wall-piece, Paper-weight, Havan samagri, Idols of Lord Ganesha and Goddess Lakshmi for this year’s Diwali festival has already started.
- RKA aims reaching 11 crore families to ignite 33 crore Diyas made of cow-dung during this year’s Deepawali festival
- It will help in making Gaushalas ‘Atma Nirbhar’ too. By providing an environment friendly alternative

to Chinese made Diyas, the campaign will boost up Make in India vision and mission.

- Promotes swadeshi movements while reducing environmental damage
- Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog (RKA) has been constituted by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for the conservation, protection and development of cows and their progeny and for giving direction to the cattle development programmes. RKA is high powered permanent body to formulate policy and to provide direction to the implementation of schemes related to cattle so as to give more emphasis on livelihood generation.

STATE OF CLIMATE SERVICES REPORT

Source – live mint

GS Paper – 3

Context - Extreme weather and climate events have increased in frequency, intensity and severity as a result of climate change, hitting vulnerable communities disproportionately hard, revealed a new United Nations (UN) report.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Report is released by **UN WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANISATION (WMO)**
- Over the last 10 years (2010-2019), the percentage of disasters associated with weather, climate and water related events increased by 9% compared to the previous decade – and by almost 14% with respect to the decade 1991-2000.
- The situation is particularly acute in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).
- After **Cyclone Pawan** made landfall in early December 2019, flooding in the Horn of Africa created highly favourable breeding conditions for the desert locust. The region is facing the worst desert locust crisis in over 25 years, and the most serious in 70 years for Kenya. Desert locust swarms are also moving across India, Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran

RECOMMENDATIONS

The report has outlined six key recommendations to improve the implementation and effectiveness of early warning systems, globally-

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- It has called for investing to fill the early warning systems capacity gaps
- To invest in African least developed countries and small island developing States.
- The focus should be on the investment on turning early warning information into early action and ensuring sustainable financing of the global observing system that underpins early warnings.
- Tracking finance flows to improve understanding of where these resources are being allocated in relation to early warning systems implementation needs and what impact this is having.
- The countries should be developing more consistency in monitoring and evaluation to better determine early warning systems effectiveness and filling data gaps, particularly in small island developing States.
- All countries should reduce their emissions by 45% from that of the 2010 levels. This is the only way to limit global heating to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Only 70 countries have agreed to carbon neutrality by 2050.

THALASSEMIA BAL SEWA YOJANA

Source – PIB

GS Paper – 2 & 3

Context - Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare launched the second phase of “Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojna” for the underprivileged Thalassemic patients.

ABOUT

- This scheme is a Coal India CSR funded Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT) program that aims to provide a one-time cure opportunity for Haemoglobinopathies like Thalassaemia and Sickle Cell Disease for patients who have a matched family donor.
- The CSR initiative was targeted to provide financial assistance to a total of 200 patients by providing a package cost not exceeding Rs. 10 lakhs per HSCT.
- Blood Transfusion facilities available in every district hospital while some districts also offer the facility in health centres at sub-district level.
- The Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana was launched to provide financial assistance. It is estimated that more than 10,000 to 12,000 children in India are born with Thalassemia in a year.

What is THALASSEMIA?

It is a blood disorder that creates less hemoglobin than normal body. It reduces the ability of Red Blood Cells to carry oxygen. It can lead to anaemia.

WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

SOURCE – economic times

GS PAPER- 3

CONTEXT - The International Monetary Fund has recently launched the World Economic Outlook 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

- According to the report, in 2021, growth is projected to rebound to 5.2 per cent, -0.2 percentage points below its June projection.
- The report has projected that India’s economy will contract by 10.3 percentage in 2020. This growth will be the slowest among the BRICS countries.
- Greater international collaboration is needed to end this health crisis. Second, to the extent possible, policies must aggressively focus on limiting persistent economic damage from this crisis.
- The recovery strengthens, policies should shift to facilitating the reallocation of workers from sectors likely to shrink on a long-term basis (travel) to growing sectors (e-commerce).
- Emerging market and developing economies are having to manage this crisis with fewer resources, as many are constrained by elevated debt and higher borrowing costs
- The global easing of monetary policy while essential for the recovery should be complemented with measures to prevent the build-up of financial risks over the medium term, and central bank independence should be safeguarded at all costs

TECH FOR TRIBALS

Source – The Hindu

GS Paper – 3

Context - The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has launched ‘Tech For Tribals’ a training programme for tribal MSMEs using Self Help Groups and Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs).

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ABOUT

- Aimed at the holistic development of tribal with a focus on entrepreneurship development, soft skills, IT, and business development
- The TRIFED is offering the training in collaboration with Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) under the Entrepreneurship Skill Development Programme.
- “Tech For Tribals” initiative was e-launched by TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs in association with Chhattisgarh MFP Federation and IIT Kanpur
- The programme aims to tap the traditional knowledge and skills of tribals and add branding, packaging and marketing skills to optimize their income through a market-led enterprise model by setting up of Van Dhan Kendras (VDVKs).
- TRIFED has tied up with reputed national institutions such as IIT, Kanpur; Art of Living, Bangalore; TISS, Mumbai; KISS, Bhubaneswar; Vivekananda Kendra, Tamil Nadu and SRIJAN, Rajasthan, for conducting Van dhan-ESDP Training Programs in the States of Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan.
- The Van Dhan tribal start-ups, a component of the same scheme, has emerged as a source of employment generation for tribal gatherers and forest dwellers and the home-bound tribal artisans

- Artificial TFAs are formed when hydrogen is made to react with the oil to produce fats resembling pure ghee/butter.
- **WHO recommendation:** Limited to less than 1% of total energy intake. It has called for **the total elimination of TFAs in global food supply by 2023.**
- **FSSAI** has proposed to limit TFA limit in foods to 2% and eliminate trans fats from foods by 2022.

INDIA TO DELIVER KILO CLASS SUBMARINE TO MYANMAR

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper - 3

Context - India will deliver a kilo class submarine to Myanmar's Navy, The INS Sindhuvir is a Kilo-Class Submarine. With this, Myanmar is to get its first submarine.

ABOUT INS SINDHUVIR

- It is a Sindhughosh-class diesel electric submarine of the Indian Navy.
- It was designed under Project 877.
- Built under an agreement between India and Russia.
- The submarine has a diving depth of 300 metres and a displacement of 3,000 tonnes
- The Kilo Class submarines were built by the Soviet Union under Paltus project

TRANS FAT

SOURCE - NEWS ON AIR

GS PAPER - 3

CONTEXT - The aim of the government is to make India Trans Fat free by 2022, a year ahead of target set by World Health Organization

WHAT ARE TRANSFATS?

- Trans Fat, a food toxin present in Partially Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils, baked and fried foods, is a major contributor to the rise in non-communicable diseases in India.
- These fats are largely produced artificially but a small amount also occurs naturally.
- Thus in our diet, these may be present as Artificial TFAs and/ or Natural TFAs.

SAGAR POLICY

- India is to transfer the INS in accordance to SAGAR Policy.
- SAGAR is Security and Growth for All in the Region.
- The policy was unveiled in 2015. It aims to deepen security cooperation with the maritime neighbours of India.
- India aims to ensure free, inclusive and open Indian Ocean Region under the policy.

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PRITHVI II MISSILE

Source -The Hindu

GS Paper -3

Context - India successfully conducted a night trial of the indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-2 missile as part of a user trial by the Army from a test range in Odisha

HIGHLIGHTS

- surface-to-surface missile
- a strike range of 350 km
- carried out from a mobile launcher, a Defence Research and Development (DRDO)
- A complete trial of the missile was monitored by Defence Research Development Organization.
- Prithvi-2 missile is capable of carrying 500-1,000 kg of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines

WORLD'S BIGGEST ZINC SMELTER PROJECT

Source - PIB

GS Paper - 3

Context - PGujarat government has announced the setting up of the world's biggest Zinc Smelter project in Dosawada in Tapi district.

Highlights

- Memorandum of Understanding for this project was signed with Vedanta Group
- The proposed 300 KTPA production capacity project would provide big employment opportunities to the local youths in thistribal area.
- The first phase of the proposed plant will be operational in 36 months.
- The project with the investment of Rs.10 thousand crore will also have a State-of-the-art Research and Development Centre.
- The project will satisfy the domestic as well as global needs through exports

RASHTRIYA AAJEEVIKA MISSION

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper - 2 and 3

Context - The Union Cabinet approved changes in the criteria to extend benefits under the Deen Dayal Antyodaya Rashtriya Aajeevika Mission to over 10.58 lakh women in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. An allocation of ₹520 crore has also been made for the next five years.

ABOUT THE MISSION

- The scheme is aimed at providing livelihood to women in rural areas.
- Very few women in J&K and Ladakh were eligible for the programme
- Certain changes in the criteria were approved by the Cabinet to ensure that 10.58 lakh women in the two Union Territories benefited from the special package.
- **Implemented by** Ministry of Rural Development

BSVI INTRODUCTION A REVOLUTIONARY STEP

Source - PIB

GS Paper - 3

Context - Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate change interacted live on his Facebook, speaking on the issue of air pollution and the steps being taken by the Central government to combat it.

Highlights

- Introduction of BS-VI compliant vehicle standard since April 2020 across the country as a revolutionary step towards the reduction of vehicular pollution
- BSVI helped reduce pollution caused by vehicles. BSVI fuel reduces the NOx emission by 70% in diesel cars, by 25% in petrol cars and reduces particulate matter(PM) in vehicles by 80%.
- Operationalization of Eastern and Western Peripheral Expressway has eased congestion by diverting traffic from Delhi

What is BS-VI?

To curb the growing menace of air pollution through the vehicle's emission, the Government of India has decided to leapfrog from the exiting BS-IV norms to the BS-VI, thereby skipping the

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BS - V norms, and to implement the BS-VI norms with effect from 1st April 2020. Only those vehicles will be sold and registered in India from 1st April 2020 onwards, which comply with these norms. The norms are stringent and at par with global standards.

NEW START TREATY

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper - 2

Context - President Vladimir Putin proposed a one-year extension without conditions of the last major nuclear arms reduction accord between Russia and the U.S.

WHAT IS NEW START TREATY ?

- The New START deal was signed in April 2010 but went into force in February 2011
- It is a nuclear arms reduction **treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation** with the formal name of **Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms**
- **Under this treaty**, the number of strategic nuclear missile launchers will be reduced by half
- It will also limit the number of deployed and non-deployed inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) launchers, submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) launchers, and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments to 800. The number of deployed ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments is limited to 700

AMBEDKAR SOCIAL INNOVATION & INCUBATION MISSION

Source - PIB

GS Paper - 2

Context- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched the Ambedkar Social Innovation and Incubation Mission (ASIIM).

About the Mission

- It is launched under Venture Capital Fund for SCs with a view to promoting innovation and enterprise among SC students studying in higher educational institutions

- To promote entrepreneurship among the SC Youth with special preference to Divyangs;
- To support (1,000) innovative ideas till 2024 through a synergetic work with the Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) set up by Department of Science and Technology;
- To support, promote, hand-hold the start-up ideas till they reach commercial stage by providing liberal equity support; and
- To incentivise students with innovative mind-set to take to entrepreneurship with confidence

AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR

SOURCE -THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 3

CONTEXT - The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) has come up with a scheme, Ayushman Sahakar, to involve co-operatives in creating healthcare infrastructure.

HIGHLIGHTS

- NCDC will give loans totalling ₹10,000 crore to prospective cooperatives to set up healthcare facilities.
- NCDC would support not just bedded facilities under this scheme but also cover all aspects of healthcare that come under the World Health Organization classification, including Indian systems of medicine,
- It will be covering Ayush, homoeopathy, drug manufacturing, drug testing, wellness centres, Ayurveda massage centres, and drug stores.
- also support education initiatives such as medical and dental colleges and those offering nursing and paramedical education.
- One of conditions for getting credit under the *Ayushman Sahakar* scheme is that members of a cooperative facility should be given services at discounted rates.
- In line with the National Digital Health Mission launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi this Independence Day, *Ayushman Sahakar* will bring a transformation in rural areas
- By virtue of their strong presence in rural areas, co-operatives should be able to revolutionise comprehensive health care services

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- Working capital and margin money to meet operational requirements will be available under scheme. Interest subvention of one per cent is available to women-majority cooperatives.
- Cooperatives that are just three months old can get funding from the NCDC.

National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC)

The NCDC set up under the Ministry of Agriculture in 1963 has, till date, financed various cooperative initiatives aggregating ₹1.57-lakh crore.

STATE DEVELOPMENT LOANS

Source – live mint

GS Paper 3

Context - The Reserve Bank of India on Friday said that it will conduct the first-ever purchase auction of state government bonds for an aggregate amount of ₹10,000 crores through open market operations (OMO)

What are state development loans?

State Development Loans (SDLs) are dated securities issued by states for meeting their market borrowings requirements. In effect, the SDL is similar to the dated securities issued by the central government. The purpose of issuing State Development Loans is to meet the budgetary needs of state governments. Each state can borrow up to a set limit through State Development Loans.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Depending on market response, the size of the auctions may be enhanced in the subsequent auctions
- RBI reserves the right to decide on the quantum of purchase of individual securities, accept bids for less than the aggregate amount, purchase marginally higher/lower than the aggregate amount, accept or reject bids.
- The RBI had announced its decision to conduct the OMO of these state development loans to ensure liquidity and support the state government borrowing program.

WHAT IS INDIA'S FIRST SEAPLANE PROJECT

Source – Indian express

GS Paper – 3

Context - The first of the five seaplane services in Gujarat, connecting the Sabarmati River in Ahmedabad to the Statue of Unity in Kevadia in Narmada district, **will be inaugurated on October 31**, the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

HIGHLIGHTS

- first 14-seater amphibian flight
- It is approximately 90 km from Vadodara, 150 km from Surat, and 200 km from Ahmedabad — with an aerial distance of 74.6km from Vadodara airport.
- Construction of the terminals at both ends is almost complete with prefabricated structures and a complete glass façade
- It is part of a directive of the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- As per the directive, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) requested state governments of Gujarat, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana and the administration of Andaman & Nicobar to propose potential locations for setting up water aerodromes to boost the tourism sector.
- A seaplane is a fixed-winged airplane designed for taking off and landing on water. It offers the public the speed of an airplane with the utility of a boat.
- There are two main types of seaplane: flying boats (often called hull seaplanes) and floatplanes.

Impact on the environment

- The water aerodrome is not a listed project/activity in the Schedule to the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, and its amendments.
- In Narmada, the Shoolpaneshwar Wildlife Sanctuary is located at an approximate aerial distance of 2.1 km from the proposed project site in the south-west direction
- During seaplane operations, there will be turbulence created in the water while takeoff and landing of seaplanes.
- This will lead to more operation processes i.e. mixing of oxygen in the water.

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- This will have a positive impact on the aquatic ecosystem near seaplane operations increasing oxygen content and decreasing carbon content in this system.

ASSAM MIZORAM BORDER DISPUTE

Source - Indian Express

GS Paper - 1

CONTEXT - Residents of Assam and Mizoram have clashed twice over territory, injuring at least eight people and torching a few huts and small shops. It spotlights the long-standing inter-state boundary issues in the North-east, particularly between Assam and the states that were carved out of it.

HIGHLIGHTS

- According to an agreement between governments of Assam and Mizoram some years ago, status quo should be maintained in no man's land in the border area.
- However, people from Lailapur broke the status quo and allegedly constructed some temporary huts. People from Mizoram side went and set fire on them
- According to Mizoram officials, the land claimed by Assam is being cultivated for a long time by residents of Mizoram.
- Although the contested land was historically cultivated by Mizoram residents, on paper it fell within the Singla Forest Reserve that is under Karimganj's jurisdiction.
- Mizoram borders Assam's Barak Valley; both border Bangladesh. Mizoram civil society groups blame "illegal Bangladeshis" (alleged migrants from Bangladesh) on the Assam side
- According to Mizoram the boundary should be demarcated on the basis of 1875 notification. On the other hand, Assam government wants to follow the 1933 demarcation. This is the point of conflict between the states.
- The 1875 notification was derived from the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act 1873.
- The Assam Mizoram conflict is comparatively less frequent than that of the conflict between Assam and other neighbouring States such as Nagaland.

HYBRID MODEL OF SMART FENCE

Source - The Hindu

GS Paper - 3

Context - The Army has considerably improved its digital surveillance along the Line of Control (LoC) to test infiltration, and work on changing the current border fence into a sensible fence built-in with a number of sensors is below method,

HIGHLIGHTS

- Converting the entire fence over 700 km stretch into smart fence due to high cost.
- The fence shall be built-in with LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) sensors, infrared sensors and cameras amongst others.
- the Army has beefed up troops near the LoC to plug gaps and it has resulted in a drop in infiltration this yr
- The new hybrid model of the smart fence being tested will cost around ₹10 lakh per km and 60 km is being attempted this year
- The multi-tier anti-infiltration grid stays in place, the first tier has been strengthened. Troops have additionally been given drones, each huge and small, to watch the floor.
- The current fence referred to as the Anti-Infiltration Obstacle System (AIOS) is positioned about 700 m from the LoC.
- With its excessive fee of degradation yearly as a result of snow, the Army got here up with a proposal to put in a sensible fence with numerous sensors built-in into it and a pilot venture was subsequently taken up
- The fence is current along most of the round 740 km lengthy LoC

INDIA US DEFENCE DEALS

SOURCE - INIDAN EXPRESS

GS PAPER - 2

CONTEXT - India and the US are preparing for the third 2+2 ministerial meeting between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and Defense Secretary Mark T Esper in New Delhi

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KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- One of the items on the agenda will be the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) — a pact with deep military implications
- Signing BECA will allow India to use the US's advanced geospatial intelligence and enhance the accuracy of automated systems and weapons like missiles and armed drones. It will give access to topographical and aeronautical data and products that will aid navigation and targeting
- This could be key for Air Force-to-Air Force cooperation.

What is BECA?

The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement largely pertains to geospatial intelligence, and sharing information on maps and satellite images for defence. According to officials, anyone who sails a ship, flies an aircraft, fights wars, locates targets, responds to natural disasters, or even navigates with a cellphone relies on geospatial intelligence.

LEMOA: The Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement was signed between India and the US in August 2016. It allows the military of each country to replenish from the other's bases: access supplies, spare parts and services from the other country's land facilities, air bases, and ports, which can then be reimbursed. This is extremely useful for Navy-to-Navy cooperation, since the US and India are cooperating closely in the Indo-Pacific.

- It will facilitate faster execution of R&D projects/programmes.
- Bid security declaration option for earnest money deposit,
- Increase of threshold limit for advance payment,
- Placement of order on lowest bidder 2 (L2) in case L1 backs out
- Exemption of bid security and performance security up to Rs 10 lakh,
- No negotiations for commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) items/services wherever price discovery is happening through market forces.
- Performance security for service contracts is linked to the payment cycle instead of total contract value.
- Procurement of stores from development partners, safeguarding of free issue material through insurance cover instead of bank guarantee (BG) are other facilitating measures adopted to help the industry.
- In the new PM-2020, the liquidated damage (LD) rate for development contracts has been reduced. The delivery period (DP) extension process has been simplified for faster decision making

HYDROGEN ENRICHED COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 3

CONTEXT - Buses running on hydrogen-enriched compressed natural gas (HCNG), a cleaner fuel compared with CNG, are going to hit the capital's roads, from Tuesday. We will explain what HCNG is, its benefits and other things.

What is HCNG?

HCNG is a hydrogen-enriched compressed natural gas (CNG). In Delhi, instead of physically blending hydrogen with CNG, hydrogen spiked CNG will be produced using compact reforming process patented by Indian Oil Corporation.

- It is cleaner and more economical.
- Power output of HCNG is also better than CNG ones.

DRDO PROCUREMENT MANUAL 2020

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 2

CONTEXT - To encourage more participation of Indian industry, including Start-ups and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Defence Research & Development (R&D) for achieving 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh released a new version of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Procurement Manual 2020 (PM-2020)

HIGHLIGHTS

- The new DRDO Procurement Manual will facilitate the indigenous Defence Industry by simplifying the processes and ensure their participation in design and development activities

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- HCNG means four per cent more fuel economy than CNG.
- HCNG will ensure 70% more reduction in carbon monoxide emissions compared to CNG
- It requires only a small hydrogen storage and a column for the mixing of hydrogen with natural gas at existing CNG stations. Safety components are similar to the CNG. HCNG is easier and safer to use than hydrogen as it contains very low energy content from hydrogen i.e., up to 30% by volume.
- HCNG reduces the engine's unburned hydrocarbon emissions and speeds up the process of combustion.
- The engine's fuel efficiency is improved by blending the CNG from hydrogen which lowers the fuel consumption of the vehicle.
- The thermal efficiency and fuel economy is also increased by HCNG.
- It lies at the southern end of the Sahyadri hills in the Western Ghats.
- It is notable as the first declared wildlife sanctuary in Maharashtra, notified in 1958, as "Dajipur Wildlife Sanctuary" and is popularly known as the "Bison Sanctuary".
- Indian bison or gaur (*Bos gaurus*) is the flagship species of the area.
- The sanctuary is spread across 351.16 sq km known to serve as a corridor for tigers and elephants moving between three states — Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

ACTIVITIES PROHIBITED AND ALLOWED

- Activities like mining and stone quarrying are prohibited, certain activities, which will be regulated and promoted
- All new and existing mining (minor and major minerals), stone quarrying and crushing units shall be prohibited with immediate effect except for meeting domestic needs of local residents, including digging up land for construction or repair work of houses within eco-sensitive zone
- Organic farming, agriculture, small-scale industries and minor infrastructure work are permitted.
- While activities like mining and stone quarrying are prohibited, certain activities, which will be regulated and promoted, are listed in the final notification. Some include construction of hotels and resorts, albeit not within 1 km of the boundary of the protected area or up to the extent of ESZ, whichever is nearer.
- Agro-forestry, use of eco-friendly transport, cottage industries, and organic farming will also be promoted by the state government.

ECO SENSITIVE ZONE

SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS

GS PAPER- 3

CONTEXT: The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has notified 250.66 sq km around Maharashtra's Radhanagri Wildlife Sanctuary (RWS), which is home to elephants and tigers, as an eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) The zone is meant to act as a buffer and a "shock absorber" for protected areas.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The demarcated area covers from 200 m to 6 km around the sanctuary.
- With the final notification, execution of development projects may be smooth outside the notified area, but also stringent measures in the notified area shall strengthen wildlife conservation measures undertaken by the government
- Areas around Radhanagri Wildlife Sanctuary located towards the southern hills of the Sahyadri range of Western Ghats were being considered by the mining lobby.

ABOUT RADHANAGRI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

- It is a wildlife sanctuary and natural World Heritage Site of category 9 and 10 since 2012, located in Kolhapur district, Maharashtra State, India.

CONCLUSION

Without notification of ESZ, mining activities and other construction activities go unchecked. With the demarcation, the uncertainty is gone for forest officials as well as industrialists. One of the best protections that come with the demarcation of ESZ is that no large infrastructure project can come up in the area or, at least, they have to go through a series of environment clearances

BLUE PINE DENSITY**SOURCE - INDIAN EXPRESS****GS PAPER - 3**

CONTEXT: The density of blue pine, an important coniferous tree, has greatly reduced in many parts of Himachal Pradesh, a study by the State Centre on Climate Change has found. The population of other temperate conifers such as deodar, fir and spruce has also reduced in some of the forests, possibly due to encroachment for the purposes of agriculture and horticulture

ABOUT BLUE PINE

- Blue pine, or *Pinus wallichiana*, is widely used in the state for timber and fuel.
- *Pinus wallichiana* is a coniferous evergreen tree native to the Himalaya, Karakoram and Hindu Kush mountains, from eastern Afghanistan east across northern Pakistan and north west India to Yunnan in southwest China.
- It grows in mountain valleys at altitudes of 1800-4300 m, reaching 30-50 m in height.
- It favours a temperate climate with dry winters and wet summers.
- Two-thirds of Himachal's area falls under recorded forest area, but around half of it remains permanently covered with glaciers or inaccessible cold deserts, and is thus permanently beyond the tree line.
- The forest cover comprises nearly 28 per cent of the state's total geographical area.

REASON FOR DECREASED DENSITY

- Dependence of people on the species for timber and fuelwood
- The other reason behind the decreased population of *Abies pindrow* (fir/tosh), *Cedrus deodara* (Himalayan cedar/devdar), *Picea smithiana* (spruce/rai) and *Pinus wallichiana* (blue pine/kail) is the moisture regime.
- The place where these species were present have good moisture regime and fertile soil.
- Therefore, local stakeholders or people tried to encroach these places for apple orchards and agricultural practices

CONCLUSION

In the Western Himalayas, striking vegetative changes are observed wherein various plant species are migrating to higher altitudes owing to warming trend

KISAN SURYODAYA YOJNA**SOURCE - PIB****GS PAPER - 2 AND 3**

CONTEXT: Prime Minister launched the 'Kisan Suryodaya Yojana' for the farmers of Gujarat.

OBJECTIVE OF THE SCHEME- To Provide electricity to farmers during the day for agriculture

FEATURES OF THE SCHEME

- To provide day-time power supply for irrigation.
- Farmers will be able to avail power supply from 5 AM to 9 PM.
- The state government has allocated a budget of Rs.3500 crore for installing transmission infrastructure under this scheme by 2023.
- 234 '66-Kilowatt' transmission lines, with a total length of 3490 circuit kilometers (CKM) will be established under the project, in addition to 220 KV substations.
- Dahod, Mahisagar, Panchmahal, Chhota Udepur, Kheda, Tapi, Gir-Somnath etc have been included under the Scheme for 2020-21.

CENTRAL GRIEVANCE PORTAL**SOURCE - PIB****GS PAPER 2**

CONTEXT - Jammu & Kashmir grievance system has been integrated with the Central Grievance Portal, thus making it the first Union Territory of India to have its district level grievance offices integrated with Central Government Portal of CPGRAMS (Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System).

WHAT IS CENTRAL GRIEVANCE PORTAL ?

- The Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System, is an online web-enabled system over NICNET developed by NIC in association with the

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Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) with an objective of speedy redress and effective monitoring of grievances by Ministries/Departments/Organizations of Government of India.

- The Department of Public Grievances in Government of India had collaborated with the Union Territory government of Jammu & Kashmir to implement the pilot phase in the districts and integrate them with the Central Government Portal of CPGRAMS.
- CPGRAMS facilitates the system generated unique registration number upon the online submission of grievances from aggrieved citizens to DPG/DARPG or concerned Ministries/Departments/Organizations.
- Automatic Online Data transmission between Ministries/Departments/Organisations and the subordinate organizations is facilitated by CPGRAMS.
- CPGRAMS facilitates the generation of automated letters like Acknowledgement and Final reply letters etc. for official correspondence with complainants.

WASTE TO WEALTH

SOURCE – PIB

GS PAPER 1 and 3

CONTEXT: With an ever increasing population and rapid pace of urbanization, the country is facing a huge challenge of waste management. The volume of waste is projected to rise from the present 62 million tonnes to about 150 million tonnes by 2030.

PROCESS OF CONVERTING WASTE TO WEALTH

- Solid Waste treatment and disposal utilizing plasma arc gasification process is an option for eco-friendly solid waste management in which large volume reduction of waste up to 95% is possible.
- The plasma gasification process uses electricity to generate high temperature plasma arc (above 3000°C) inside the plasma reactor which converts the waste into syngas.
- The produced syngas when passed through a series of gas purification system comprising of catalytic converter, redox reactor, cyclone separator, scrubber and condenser is ready for use in gas engines for generation of electricity.
- The residual ash can be mixed with cement for prepa-

ration of recycled bricks for usage in construction. Thus, Science helps in the creation of 'Wealth from Waste'.

DISADVANTAGES

- This technology is not economically viable as energy requirements for waste treatment using this technology is very high
- The high rate of electrode consumption further leads to an increase in recurring expenses making the process expensive and not an economically-rationalised option.

SNOW LEOPARD HABITAT CONSERVATION PROJECT

SOURCE – PIB

GS PAPER- 3

CONTEXT: Government committed to landscape restoration for snow leopard habitat conservation.

ABOUT Snow Leopard

- It is a large cat native to the mountain ranges of Central and South Asia.
- It is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List because the global population is estimated to number less than 10,000 mature individuals and is expected to decline about 10% by 2040
- It is threatened by poaching and habitat destruction following infrastructural developments
- It inhabits alpine and subalpine zones
- In India, their geographical range encompasses a large part of the western Himalayas including the states and UTs of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

ABOUT PROJECT SNOW LEOPARD

- It was launched in 2009 to safeguard and conserve India's unique natural heritage of high altitude wildlife populations and their habitats by promoting conservation through participatory policies and actions.
- It has been catalyzed by Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF) and involves government and non-governmental stakeholders from the states.

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- Government is committed to landscape restoration for snow leopard habitat conservation, and implementing participatory landscape-based management plans involving local stakeholders,
- All sections of society need to be vigilant in order to uphold integrity in all aspects of our national life.
- The Commission desires that all organisations focus on internal (housekeeping) activities which are to be taken up in campaign mode as part of the Vigilance Awareness Week.

NEED FOR PROTECTING SNOW LEOPARD

- Protecting the snow leopard and its habitat ensures protection of the major Himalayan rivers that support the teeming millions downstream.
- It also ensures that the ecological balance is maintained in these fragile ecosystems.
- This multi-lateral programme comprises of 12 snow leopard range countries and they have developed national priorities and identified large landscapes to support viable populations of snow leopards.
- This includes improvement of internal processes, time bound disposal of work and systemic improvements leveraging technology.
- Commission emphasises making all processes transparent including payment to outsourced workers, house allotments, updation and digitization of assets including land records, condemnation of old furniture and weeding out old records following prescribed procedures/ extant rules .

OBJECTIVES

- It exclusively focuses on developing landscape-based management plans, habitat restoration plans, livelihoods improvement, mitigation of wildlife crime and illegal trade in wildlife, human-wildlife conflict mitigation strategies, improving awareness and communications strategies.
 - The project also encourages the States and UTs to adopt innovative strategies to resolve issues related to multi-stakeholder landscape management, human-wildlife conflicts, wildlife crime and trade in wildlife parts and products, capacity building, climate-smart energy solutions etc.
- The Commission has requested all Central Government Ministries / Organizations to conduct activities relevant to the theme both within their organization, and outreach activities for public/citizens:**
- a. Use organizational website for dissemination of employees/ customer oriented information and to make available avenues for redressal of grievances.
 - b. Organisations to conduct various outreach activities for dissemination of anti-corruption message and stressing the necessity of vigilant India as essential for a prosperous India. Online modes to be extensively used.
 - c. Extensive use of social media platforms, bulk SMS/ E-mail, Whatsapp, electronic and print media etc. for spreading awareness.

VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK

SOURCE - PIB

GS PAPER- 2

CONTEXT: The Central Vigilance Commission observes the Vigilance Awareness Week from 27th October to 2nd November, 2020.

THEME

The Vigilance Awareness Week is being observed from 27th October to 2nd November, 2020 with the theme, "सतर्क भारत, समृद्धि भारत - Satark Bharat, Samridhh Bharat (Vigilant India, Prosperous India).

OBJECTIVE

- The Commission believes that corruption is a major hindrance to the progress of the nation.

WORLD POLIO DAY

SOURCES - INDIAN EXPRESS

GS PAPER 2

CONTEXT: October 24 is observed as World Polio Day every year in order to call on countries to stay vigilant in their fight against the disease.

BACKGROUND

World Polio Day was established by Rotary International over a decade ago to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop the vaccine against the disease.

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MONITORED BY : Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), led by national governments and the WHO, has been monitoring the disease situation globally.

WHAT IS POLIO ?

According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Polio is a crippling and potentially deadly disease that affects the nervous system... Because the virus lives in the faeces (poop) of an infected person, people infected with the disease can spread it to others when they do not wash their hands well after defecating (pooping). People can also be infected if they drink water or eat food contaminated with infected feces. The virus multiplies in the intestine, from where it can invade the nervous system and can cause paralysis. Once that happens, the patient is crippled for life because there is no treatment for the affliction. Polio infection, however, can be easily prevented by a vaccine.

SYMPTOMS OF POLIO

- Some people have only minor symptoms, such as fever, tiredness, nausea, headache, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, stiffness in the neck and back, and pain in the arms and legs.
- In rare cases, polio infection causes permanent loss of muscle function (paralysis).

Which are the countries where the disease has seen recent outbreaks?

- In 2019, polio outbreaks were recorded in the Philippines, Malaysia, Ghana, Myanmar, China, Cameroon, Indonesia and Iran, which were mostly vaccine-derived (a rare strain of the virus genetically mutated from the strain in the vaccine).
- According to the WHO, if the oral vaccine-virus is excreted and allowed to circulate in an un- or under-immunised population for at least 12 months, it can mutate to cause infections.
- As per the CDC, Afghanistan and Pakistan are the two countries that are the last stronghold of the wild poliovirus.
- In Pakistan, the number of reported wild poliovirus cases has increased in 2020.

INDIA'S SITUATION

- India was declared polio-free in January 2014, after three years of zero cases, an achievement widely be-

lieved to have been spurred by the successful pulse polio campaign in which all children were administered polio drops.

- The last case due to wild poliovirus in the country was detected on January 13, 2011

LIFE IN MINIATURE PROJECT

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER 1

CONTEXT: Google is set to use cool new tech like machine learning, Augmented Reality (AR), and high-definition robotic cameras to jazz up India's culture and heritage using miniature paintings

Launched by - The Union Ministry of Culture

OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

- Users will be able to see famous miniature collections of the National Museum, like the Ramayana, Royal Saga, Pahari style paintings in never before seen ways and in extraordinary detail, in just a few clicks at g.co/LifeInMiniature
- The project highlights upon the importance of the Digital India mission. It also spotlights the role of technology in the conservation of India's heritage.
- Its focus on product innovation, stating that Google's commitment to driving social empowerment and inclusion is a true asset to India.
- The artworks showcased are presented along five universal themes of the human relationship with nature, love, celebration, faith and power.

TECHNOLOGIES USED

- The project uses technologies like machine learning, augmented reality and digitization with high-definition robotic cameras, to showcase these special works of art in a magical new way.

WHAT IS MINIATURE PAINTING ?

Miniature painting is a traditional style of art that is very detailed, often referred to as painting or working "in miniature". Because of their origins as illuminations, they are also painted to have as smooth of a surface as possible.

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INDIA AUSTRALIA CIRCULAR ECONOMY HACKATHON

SOURCE - PIB
GS PAPER 2 AND 3

CONTEXT

AIM (Atal Innovation Mission), in association with CSIRO, is organizing a two-day hackathon on the circular economy, 'India-Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE)'

AIM

- **I-ACE** will focus on the identification and development of innovative technology solutions by bright-minded students, startups, and MSMEs of both nations.
- To make our economy less resource-intensive and ensure our economic growth is ecologically compatible.

Key themes

1. Innovation in packaging reducing packaging waste
2. Innovation in food supply chains avoiding waste
3. Creating opportunities for plastic waste reduction
4. Recycling critical energy metals and e-waste

BENEFITS OF INDIA AUSTRALIA CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- India and Australia can align research and developmental efforts to achieve more at a challenging time in the history of mankind.
- In the long run a circular economy model will provide more jobs and higher economic growth.
- It will also reduce cost, drive innovation, and have significant environmental benefits.
- To make our economy less resource-intensive and ensure our economic growth is ecologically compatible.'

CONCLUSION

The need of the hour is to adopt a disruptive way of doing things, which is based on sustainability and moving towards a circular economy.

INDIA ENERGY FORUM

SOURCE - THE HINDU
GS PAPER 2

CONTEXT

PM's address at the inauguration of India Energy Forum

THEME

India's Energy Future in a world of Change"

CURRENT CONDITION OF ENERGY SECTOR

- Energy demand fell by almost one third.
- There has been price instability. Investment decisions have been impacted.
- Leading global bodies project that there will be a contraction in global energy demand over the next few years also.
- But, these agencies project India to emerge as a leading energy consumer. India is set to nearly double its energy consumption over the long term.

OBJECTIVE

- India's Energy Plan aims to ensure energy justice
- Growth centric
- Industry friendly
- Environment is conscious.
- To increase the renewable energy installed capacity by 175 GW by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030.
- Increasing domestic gas production
- We plan to achieve 'One Nation One Gas Grid' and shift towards a gas-based economy.
- transparent and flexible markets for both oil and gas
- To increase the domestic production of natural gas. And, to bring uniformity in the market price discovery of gas

KEY DRIVERS

These drivers of change are:

1. Accelerating our efforts to move towards a gas-based economy.

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2. Cleaner use of fossil fuels particularly petroleum and coal
3. Greater reliance on domestic sources to drive bio-fuels.
4. Achieving the renewables target of 450 GW by 2030.
5. Increasing the contribution of electricity to de-carbonize mobility.
6. Moving into the emerging fuels including hydrogen
7. Digital innovation across all the energy systems.

dal anti-inflammatory drugs like diclofenac (now banned) is one of the primary reasons for the decline in the vulture population.

- Under the plan, every state will host at least one vulture safe zone to conserve the remnant population of vultures in the state. These centers will facilitate conservation and breeding of vultures.

GS These drivers of change are:

1. Accelerating our efforts to move towards a gas-based economy.
2. Cleaner use of fossil fuels particularly petroleum and coal
3. Greater reliance on domestic sources to drive bio-fuels.
4. Achieving the renewables target of 450 GW by 2030.
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7. Digital innovation across all the energy systems.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR VULTURE CONSERVATION

SOURCE - INDIAN EXPRESS

GS PAPER 3

CONTEXT

In a bid to save endangered species of vultures from extinction, the National Board for Wildlife has approved a new plan that proposes setting up Vulture Conservation Breeding Centres in some States, including Tamil Nadu.

KEY FACTS

- A captive breeding center would come up at the Sigur Reserve Forest Range in the buffer zone of the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve.
- About 180 Oriental White-backed Vultures, a critically endangered species, are found here.
- The numbers of Long-billed Vultures, Red-headed Vultures, and Egyptian Vultures have dwindled to double and single digits.

Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2020-25

- A vital feature is preventing misuse of veterinary non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.
- There is a need to prevent the main food of vultures — animal carcasses — from getting poisoned by veterinary drugs
- Sigur Reserve Forest is the last surviving breeding ground for the critically endangered vulture in the State.
- Contamination of vulture food with non-steroi-

TWO NEW RAMSAR SITES DECLARED IN INDIA

SOURCE - HINDUSTAN TIMES

GS PAPER- 3

Context

The Kabartal Wetland in Bihar and Asan Conservation Reserve in Uttarakhand have been designated as Ramsar sites, building them 'Wetlands of International Importance'.

What are Ramsar sites ?

Ramsar Sites List is one of the crucial pillars of Ramsar Convention, the only multilateral environmental agreement focussed on wetlands. The vision for creating this List is to 'develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits/services'.

Kabartal wetland

- Kabartal, a freshwater marsh of North Bihar and Asan Barrage in Doon Valley of Uttarakhand

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- Kabartal, also known as Kanwar jheel covers 2,620 hectares of the Indo-Gangetic plains, in Begusarai district of the state of Bihar.
- The site acts as a vital flood buffer for the region besides providing livelihood opportunities to the local communities.
- As a habitat to biodiversity, the wetland supports about 165 plant, 394 animals and around 50 fish species.
- Kabartal is also an important stopover along the Central Asian Flyway, with 58 migratory waterbirds using it as a wintering site.
- Besides, critically endangered vultures including red-headed vulture and white-rumped vulture also use the site as a habitat.

Asan conservation reserves

- Asan Conservation reserve is a 444-hectare stretch of the Asan River running down to its confluence with the Yamuna River in Dehradun district of Uttarakhand.
- The site is a biodiversity hub that supports 330 species of birds including the critically endangered red-headed vulture (*Sarcogyps calvus*), white-rumped vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*) and Baer's pochard (*Aythya baeri*).
- It also supports large congregations of migratory birds like red-crested pochard and ruddy shelduck and is a known feeding, spawning and migrating site for over 40 fish species.

Conclusion

Wetlands International South Asia has been working closely with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the entire designation process

NET ZERO EMISSION BY 2050

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER- 3

CONTEXT

European Union environment ministers struck a deal recently to make the bloc's 2050 net zero emissions target legally binding, but left a decision on a 2030 emissions-cutting target for leaders.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS of the New deal

- The landmark climate change law will form the basis for Europe's plan to slash greenhouse gas emissions, which will reshape all sectors, from transport to heavy industry, and require hundreds of billions of euros in annual investments.
- To make the 2050 net zero emissions target an EU-wide goal, rather than a requirement for individual countries, potentially letting some have higher emissions if others make deeper cuts.
- The EU should set an emissions-cutting goal for 2040.

Effect of the New deal - The EU's climate targets are expected to tighten the supply of permits in the market.

What is Net Zero Mission - 'Net zero' means that any emissions are balanced by absorbing an equivalent amount from the atmosphere.

In order to meet the 1.5°C global warming target in the Paris Agreement, global carbon emissions should reach net zero around mid-century. For developed nations such as the UK, the date may need to be earlier

INDIA POST US POSTAL SERVICE SIGN AGREEMENT FOR ELECTRONIC EXCHANGE OF CUSTOMS DATA

SOURCE - PIB

GS PAPER - 2

CONTEXT

AIR Department of Posts and United States Postal Service, USPS have entered into an agreement with India for electronic exchange of customs data related to postal shipments exchanged between the two countries.

Objective

To facilitate ease of exports for small and large exporters through postal channels from different parts of the country and will contribute towards making India an Export Hub for the world

AIR

BENEFITS OF THE AGREEMENT

- This will also improve the performance of postal services in terms of reliability, visibility and security
- Exchange of Electronic Advance Data as per the

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Agreement will be a key driver towards promoting mutual trade with emphasis on the exports from different parts of India to USA through postal channel.

- This will fulfill a major demand of export industry to expedite customs clearances of export items.

CHILD CARE LEAVE

SOURCE - THE HINDU

GS PAPER- 2

CONTEXT

Male government employees raising a child alone are now entitled to child care leave,

KEY PROVISIONS

- Single male parent' includes unmarried employees, widowers, and divorcees, who may be expected to take up the responsibility of caring for a child single-handedly
- An employee on child care leave may now leave the headquarters with the prior approval of the competent authority,
- Leave Travel Concession (LTC) may be availed by the employee even if he is on child care leave
- Child care leave can be granted at 100 percent of leave salary for the first 365 days and 80 percent of leave salary for the next 365 days
- In the case of a disabled child, the condition that child care leave can be availed by the parents only till the child is 22 years of age has been removed.

CONCLUSION

Describing it as a path-breaking and progressive reform to bring ease of living for government employees

ELECTRICITY ACCESS AND UTILITY BENCHMARKING REPORT

SOURCE - PIB

GS PAPER - 3

CONTEXT

NITI Aayog, Ministry of Power, Rockefeller Foundation, and Smart Power India launched the 'Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities' report

Aims and Objective

- Aimed at capturing insights from both the demand (electricity customers) as well as supply side (electricity distribution utilities)
- Evaluate the status of electricity access in India across these states and distribution utilities along all dimensions that constitute meaningful access
- Benchmark utilities' capacity to provide electricity access and identify the drivers of sustainable access
- Develop recommendations for enhancing sustainable electricity access

Key finding of the report

- As much as 92% of customers reported the overall availability of electricity infrastructure within 50 metres of their premises; however, not all have connections, the primary reason being the distance of households from the nearest pole.
- Overall, 87% of the surveyed customers have access to grid-based electricity. The remaining 13% either use non-grid sources or don't use any electricity at all.
- The hours of supply have improved significantly across the customer categories to nearly 17 hours per day.
- Nearly 85% of customers reported to have a metered electricity connection.
- Access to electricity is observed in 83% of household customers.
- A satisfaction index was created to assess the overall satisfaction level of customers with utility services. The study suggested that a total of 66% of those surveyed were satisfied--74% of customers in urban areas and 60% in rural area

KEY AREAS

- Learnings from DBT schemes in Punjab
- Tariff simplification and rationalization
- Best practices from high-performing Indian discoms.

RECOMMENDATION

- Prioritizing the release of new connections for non-household customers

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- transfer of subsidies or other benefits directly into a customer's account
- Enhanced technology-driven customer service
- Ensuring 100% metering of customers
- Segregation of feeder lines
- They can register on the agriculture department's registration portal after insuring the crop to get the benefit of the floor price.
- Setting up the entire supply chain process like cold storage facilities and refrigerated vehicles for transporting the produce

CONCLUSIONS

Key recommendations provided in the report in the areas of policy and regulation, process improvement, infrastructure and capacity-building of utilities would be gainfully utilized for improving the power distribution sector. Government of India has been working tirelessly to improve the health of public electricity distribution utilities. However, certain bottlenecks--such as regulated tariffs and inadequate infrastructure--continue to hinder efforts in providing 24x7 electricity to all.

Conclusion

The target is to increase the production by an additional 1 lakh metric tonne each of vegetables and tuber crops this year

KERALA FIRST STATE TO FIX MSP FOR VEGETABLES

**SOURCE - LIVEMINT
GS PAPER 3**

CONTEXT

Kerala has become the first state in the country to fix the minimum support price (MSP) for vegetables. The floor price for 16 varieties of vegetables. The scheme would come into effect from November 1.

What are its benefits ?

- This is going to provide relief as well as support for the farmers.
- The MSP will be 20 per cent above the production cost of the vegetable.
- Even if the market price goes below the floor price, the produce will be procured at the MSP from the farmers.
- The produce will be graded as per the quality and the floor price will be fixed based on the quality.
- As many as 16 varieties of vegetables would be covered in the first phase and there is a provision to revise the MSP price on a regular basis
- Benefit of scheme to farmers
- The scheme would benefit a farmer with a maximum of 15 acres of vegetable cultivation per season.

OPERATION MERI SAHELI

**SOURCE- PIB
GS PAPER - 3**

CONTEXT

Indian Railways has launched "Meri Saheli" initiative for focused action on security of women across all zones with an objective to provide safety and security to lady passengers travelling by trains for their entire journey from starting station to destination station.

How this mission will be implemented ?

- An initiative of RPF, the Strategy of the entails inter-action with lady passengers especially those travelling alone by a team of young lady RPF personnel at the originating station.
- These lady passengers are briefed about all precautions to be taken during the journey and told to dial 182 in case they face or see any problem in the coach.
- The RPF team collects only the seat numbers of the ladies and conveys them to stoppages en-route.
- The platform duty RPF personnel at the stopping stations en-route keep unobtrusive watch over the concerned coaches and berths and if need arises, interact with the lady passengers.
- RPF/RPSF escort onboard also covers all the coaches/identified berths during its duty period.
- RPF teams at the destination collect the feedback from the identified lady passengers. The feedback is then analysed and corrective action, if any, is taken.
- If some distress call comes from a train covered under "Meri Saheli" initiative, the disposal of the call is monitored at the level of senior officers.

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SOFIA

SOURCE – ECONOMIC TIMES

GS PAPER – 3

CONTEXT

NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) has confirmed, for the first time, water on the sunlit surface of the Moon

What does it Indicates ?

- This discovery indicates that water may be distributed across the lunar surface, and not limited to cold, shadowed places.
- Previous observations of the Moon's surface detected some form of hydrogen, but were unable to distinguish between water and its close chemical relative, hydroxyl (OH).
- This discovery challenges our understanding of the lunar surface and raises intriguing questions about resources relevant for deep space exploration

Where the water is found ? SOFIA has detected water molecules (H₂O) in Clavius Crater, one of the largest craters visible from Earth, located in the Moon's southern hemisphere.

NASA's ARTEMIS PROGRAMME -Under NASA's Artemis program, the agency is eager to learn all it can about the presence of water on the Moon in advance of sending the first woman and next man to the lunar surface in 2024 and establishing a sustainable human presence there by the end of the decade.

DAM REHABILITATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Source - ECONOMIC TIMES

GS PAPER – 1 and 3

CONTEXT

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project Phase II & Phase III

ABOUT THE PROJECT

- **The Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), Government of India**, with assistance from the World Bank, is in the process of taking up the **Dam Rehabilitation And Improvement Project (DRIP)**,

- Development of appropriate institutional mechanisms for the safe operation and maintenance of all large dams would also be taken up in these states.
- In addition, strengthening of the institutional set up for national level dam safety surveillance and guidance would be taken up in Central Water Commission (CWC) under Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR).
- The project implementation agencies for DRIP would be the owners of dam (i.e. Water Resources Departments (WRD) or State Electricity Boards (SEB)) in the five participating States.
- The overall implementation of the project would be coordinated by Central Water Commission.

Objective of the Project

- To improve the safety and performance of selected existing dams and associated appurtenances in a sustainable manner.
- To strengthen the dam safety institutional set-up in participating states as well as at central level.

PRODUCTION LINKED INCENTIVE SCHEME

SOURCE- THE HINDU

GS PAPER –3

Context

The government will introduce the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for more sectors to boost domestic manufacturing –NITI AYOG

Objective

To incentivize investors in this country to put up globally comparable capacity in scale and competitiveness

Key highlights

- Incentives of 4-6 percent to electronics companies which manufacture mobile phones and other electronic components such as transistors, diodes, thyristors, resistors, capacitors, and nano-electronic components such as micro electromechanical systems
- Companies that make mobile phones which sell for Rs 15,000 or more will get an incentive of up to 6 percent on incremental sales of all such mobile phones made in India.

Benefits of the scheme

Attract big foreign investment in the sector, while also encouraging domestic mobile phone makers to expand their units and presence in India.

Tenure of the scheme

The PLI scheme will be active for five years with the financial year (FY) 2019-20 considered as the base year for the calculation of incentives. This means that all investments and incremental sales registered after FY20 shall be taken into account while computing the incentive to be given to each company.

JAMMU KASHMIR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES BILL 2020**SOURCE - PRS INDIA****GS PAPER - 2****CONTEXT**

The Lok Sabha passed a bill under which Kashmiri, Dogri, and Hindi, apart from the existing Urdu and English, will be the official languages in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir

- **Official languages:** The Bill declares Kashmiri, Dogri, Urdu, Hindi, and English as the official languages to be used for the official purposes of the union territory, from such date as the Administrator of the union territory may notify. The Bill adds that the business in the Legislative Assembly of the union territory will be transacted in these official languages.
- **Use of English:** The Bill clarifies that English may continue to be used in the union territory for those administrative and legislative purposes for which it was being used before the commencement of the Act.
- The Administrator may, for the **promotion and development of regional languages** of the Union territory, take necessary steps to strengthen the existing institutional mechanisms such as the Academy of Art, Culture and languages in the Union territory. The institutional mechanisms referred to in sub-section (1) shall make special efforts for the promotion and development of Gojri, Pahari and Punjabi languages.

SERB - POWER SCHEMES**SOURCE - THE HINDU****GS PAPER - 1 AND 3****CONTEXT**

Science and Technology Minister launched the SERB - POWER schemes that aim to encourage emerging as well as eminent women researchers to undertake R&D activities in frontier areas of science and engineering.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The schemes will promote women researchers in regular service in academic and research institutions to take up R&D at the highest level through two categories of research support: SERB - POWER Fellowship and SERB - POWER Research Grants.
- **The SERB-Power Fellowship** offers a personal fellowship and a research grant to top performing women researchers for a period of three year.
- **The SERB - Power Research Grants** ensure funding to undertake highly impactful research across all disciplines of Science & Technology.
- **Under the SERB - Power Research Grants**, women researchers will be funded under two categories. The first category includes women scientists from IITs, IISERs, IISc, NITs, central universities, and national labs of the Central government institutions. They will be eligible for funding up to Rs 60 lakhs for three years.
- Level two will comprise scientists and researchers from state universities/ colleges and private academics. They will be eligible for funding up to 30 lakhs for three years

SERB

- The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) is a statutory body established through an Act of Parliament. Supporting basic research in emerging areas of Science & Engineering are the primary and distinctive mandate of the Board.
- The Board structure, with both financial and administrative powers vested in the Board, would enable quicker decisions on research issues, greatly improving thereby our responsiveness to the genuine needs of the research scientists and the S&T system.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

DRAFT MODEL ACT OF LAND TITLES

SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS

GS PAPER 3

CONTEXT

The NITI Aayog released the draft model Act and rules for states for regulation on conclusive land titling, providing for a state government to order establishment of title registration for all or any type of immovable properties

Aim

Reducing land-related litigations and improved land acquisition for infrastructure projects.

Conclusive Titling system - The government provides guaranteed titles for the land, and compensation in case of any ownership disputes.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Any person aggrieved by an entry in the Record of Titles may file an objection before the Title Registration Officer within three years from the date of such notification, following which the Title Registration Officer make an entry in Register of Titles and in the Register of Disputes and refer the case to the Land Dispute Resolution Officer.
- A party aggrieved with an order of Land Dispute Resolution Officer may file an appeal before the Land Titling Appellate Tribunal within 30 days of passing of such an order,
- A special bench of the high court shall be designated to deal with appeals against the orders passed by the Land Titling Appellate Tribunal

PUBLIC AFFAIR INDEX

SOURCE – THE HINDU

GS PAPER 2

CONTEXT

Kerala was adjudged the best governed state in the country while Uttar Pradesh ended at the bottom in the large states category, according to the Public Affairs Index-2020 released by the Public Affairs Centre. The report was released by the committee headed by a former Indian Space Research Organisation chairman Kasturirangan

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- States were ranked on governance performance based on a composite index in the context of sustainable development.
- Four southern states, Kerala Tamil Nadu Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka stood in the first four ranks in the large state category in terms of governance
- Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Bihar were at the bottom of the ranking, scoring negative points in the category.
- In the small state category, Goa ranked first followed by Meghalaya and Himachal Pradesh
- Worst performers who scored negative points are Manipur Delhi and Uttarakhand
- Chandigarh emerged the best governed union territory in the category of UTs ,followed by Puducherry and Lakshadweep ,Dadar and Nagar Haveli ,Andaman, Jammu and Kashmir and Nicobar were the least performers.

On what parameters it is analysed ? According to the PAC, the governance performance is analysed in the context of sustainable development defined by three pillars of equity, growth and sustainability.

PAI 2020 generates and the insights that it provides must compel us to reflect on the economic and social transition that is underway in India.

STAR CAMPIGNER

SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS

GS PAPER 2

CONTEXT

Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister and Congress leader Kamal Nath has approached the Supreme Court to challenge the order of the Election Commission of India (ECI) revoking his star campaigner status for MP by-elections.

Who are star campaigners?

They can be described as **persons who are nominated by parties to campaign in a given set of Constituencies**. These persons are, in almost all cases, prominent and popular faces within the Party. However, **there are no specific definitions according to law or the Election Commission of India.**

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Who prepares the list of star campaigners?

To prepare the list of star campaigners is the right of political parties, not of the Election Commission

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

Election Commission of India's Model Code of Conduct is a set of guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India for conduct of political parties and candidates during elections mainly with respect to speeches, polling day, polling booths, portfolios, election manifestos, processions and general conduct. These set of norms has been evolved with the consensus of political parties who have consented to abide by the principles embodied in the said code in its letter and spirit. The Model Code of Conduct comes into force immediately on announcement of the election schedule by the commission for the need of ensuring free and fair elections.

BANDHU

SOURCE - PIB

GS PAPER - 1,2

CONTEXT

Union Minister of State for Education, launched a self-help website - Bandhu - for students of IIT Bombay.

Need

- A good education institution is one in which every student feels welcomed and cared for, where a safe and stimulating learning environment exists, where a wide range of learning experiences are offered, and where good physical infrastructure and appropriate resources conducive to learning are available to all students.
- Students are the prime stakeholders in the education system. Vibrant campus life is essential for high-quality teaching-learning processes.
- Towards this end, students should be given plenty of opportunities for participation in sports, culture/ arts clubs, eco-clubs, activity clubs, community service projects etc

Importance

- It addresses challenges ranging from adjustment to college life, academic stress, and mental health. Bandhu has curated reads, motivational alumni journals, expert podcasts and tools for self-exploration.

- They pledged to support IIT Bombay and help students enhance their emotional well-being.
- The students of IIT Bombay need to stay strong, both physically and emotionally to construct and pursue their dreams.
- It will also point out when it could be time to seek help from the support structure available at IIT Bombay

National Education Policy - counselling system

National Education Policy 2020 says that in every education institution, there shall be counselling systems for handling stress and emotional adjustments. Furthermore, a systematized arrangement shall be created to provide the requisite support to students from rural backgrounds, including increasing hostel facilities as needed. All higher education institutions will ensure quality medical facilities for all students in their institutions

STRATEGIC POLICY AND FACILITATION BEUREAU

SOURCE -THE HINDU

GS PAPER - 3

CONTEXT

The AYUSH Ministry is set to constitute a 'Strategic Policy and Facilitation Bureau' (SPFB) in collaboration with M/s Invest India, to facilitate planned and systematic growth of the Ayush sector.

Importance

- SPFB will support ministry in strategic and policy-making initiatives to realise the full potential of the sector and stimulate growth and investment.
- As the Covid-19 pandemic leaves indelible imprints on the health-seeking behaviour of people around the world, such a strategy unit could lend immense support to the stakeholders of the Ayush sector
- The SPFB would carry out various activities, including knowledge creation and management, strategic and policy-making support, and state policy bench-marking.
- It would provide for investment facilitation — follow-up and facilitation of investment cases and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), and coordination among different departments, organisations and states

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Working of the Beureau

As a partner in the project, M/S Invest India would collaborate extensively with the Ministry to frame the work-plan of the Bureau and define its short and long-term targets. 'Invest India' would deploy highly trained and expert resources to implement and execute the plans of the AYUSH Ministry

The activities to be undertaken by the SPFB would include :

- i. Knowledge Creation and Management,
- ii. Strategic & Policy-Making Support,
- iii. State Policy Bench marking: Undertaking State Policy bench marking to formulate uniform guidelines/regulations regarding AYUSH sector in India,
- iv. Investment Facilitation: Follow up and facilitation of investment cases and MoUs, and coordination among different Department, organisations and States.
- v. Issue Resolution: Invest India would work with companies and other institutions on issue resolution across States and among various sub-sectors

connection (FHTC) to all rural homes of the country by 2024 but at the same time focuses on service delivery, so that rural households get uninterrupted water supply in their homes.

- The programme also focuses on sustainability of drinking water sources through water conservation measures, grey water treatment and reuse as well as operation & maintenance.
- The goal of Jal Jeevan Mission is to ensure that every household have assured drinking water supply in adequate quantity of prescribed quality on long-term basis at affordable service delivery charges leading to improvement in living standard of rural community, particularly women & children
- Objective - to ensure water supply to every home, functionality of taps on long-term basis, decentralised operation & management & water testing facilities for general public.
- The mission gives highest priority to water quality. For this, the States/ UTs are urged to speed up the accreditation of the water testing laboratories

JAL JEEVAN MISSION

SOURCE - PIB
GS PAPER - 2

CONTEXT

National Jal Jeevan Mission, Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti is organizing a virtual conference with ministers in-charge of rural water supply of all States/UTs

Objective of the conference - The objective of the VC is to discuss all these issues at length to give the desired pace and sustain the momentum for implementation of the life changing mission to ensure every rural home gets safe water in their homes regularly and on long-term basis.

About Jal Jeevan Mission

- Announced by Prime Minister on 73rd Independence Day i.e. 15 August, 2019, Jal Jeevan Mission aims to bring reforms in drinking water sector.
- The flagship programme of the Union Government being implemented in partnership with States, which not only aims to provide functional household tap

Water Testing

- In some States/ UTs, these labs are open to public but charges for testing are so high that it is not possible for any common family to take water sample and get it tested.
- The mission encourages these labs are opened to public for testing of their water samples on nominal charge as well as GP/ VWSC/ PaaniSamiti are trained to test water using kits, and data is uploaded concurrently, it will help in ensuring potability of water.
- Thus, by integrating these laboratories and making them open to general public will help in ascertaining potability of water supplied through taps. It will help in improving the public health in general and women and children in particular.

NYAY KAUSHAL

Source: The Hindu

Topic

Government schemes and Initiatives (Judiciary Initiatives)

Context

The first ever e-resource centre and virtual court for traffic and transport to enable speedy justice for litigants, called 'Nyay Kaushal' has been inaugurated by chief justice of India at Nagpur.

The virtual court will be working from Katol in Nagpur district of Maharashtra. The virtual court can deal with all traffic challan cases from every corner of Maharashtra online.

Significance

- The e-resource Centre at Nagpur is meant to be a step at mitigating various inequalities, being connected to the Supreme Court, the High Courts and the Taluka Courts.
- The centre will provide the easiest way of filing court matters by utilising technology.
- It will provide benefits in saving time, avoidance of exertion, travelling long distances, and a saving in costs.
- It will be possible for the litigants to pay the fine and get the traffic challan case disposed of with the click of a button on a smart phone or a computer.

Facts & other details

- Delhi was the first to start virtual traffic courts across India.
- Nearly 202.35 crore transactions have been recorded from e-court websites till now, and the total number of emails sent to advocates and litigants in 2020 was approximately 4.84 crore emails.
- The e-court mobile application records nearly 35 lakh hits daily and nearly 3,50,000 automated emails were being sent daily.
- Further, 47,65,000 cases were registered by e-court websites, with e-filing facility available in 17 High Courts, three High Court Benches, and several district courts, as of the present date.

TYPHOON GONI

SOURCE - Indian Express

GS PAPER - 1, 3

Context

Typhoon Rolly or Goni, made landfall in the eastern Philippines.

What is the difference between a hurricane and a typhoon?

- There is no difference. Depending on where they occur, hurricanes may be called typhoons or cyclones.
- The tropical cyclones that form over the Atlantic Ocean or the eastern Pacific Ocean are called hurricanes and the ones that form in the Northwest Pacific are called typhoons.

What are hurricanes and how do they form?

- When the warm, moist air rises upward from the surface of the ocean, it creates an area of low air pressure below.
- When this happens, the air from the surrounding areas, which has higher pressure, enters this space, eventually rising when it becomes warm and moist too.
- As the warm and moist air continues to rise, the surrounding air will keep entering the area of low air pressure.
- When the warm air rises and cools off, the water in the air forms clouds and this system of clouds and winds continues to grow and spin, fuelled by the ocean's heat and the water that evaporates from its surface.
- As such storm systems rotate faster and faster, an eye forms in the centre. Storms that form towards the north of the equator rotate counterclockwise and those that form south of the equator spin clockwise because of the rotation of the Earth on its axis.

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KEVADIA TOURISM CIRCUIT

Source: Indian Express

GS PAPER - 1

Context

17 tourism projects around the Statue of Unity (SoU), has been inaugurated recently by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is called Kevadia Tourism Circuit.

About Statue of Unity

Nestled between the Satpura and Vindhya mountain ranges in Kevadia (village) of Narmada district, the 182-metre-high statue dedicated to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, built at a cost of Rs 3,000 crore, is said to be the tallest in the world. The statue was inaugurated in 2018.

What is the Kevadia Tourism Circuit?

Kevadia, a village in the tribal Narmada district was a popular picnic spot even before the SoU came up. The circuit covers 35 tourist spots, out of which the Valley of Flowers, Vishwa Van, Jungle Safari, Cactus Garden, Butterfly Garden, Ekta Nursery, Tent City, Khalvani Eco-tourism, Zarwani Eco-tourism, Nauka Vihar and River Rafting, located around the periphery of the statue and the Narmada Dam, are already open.

Major attractions of the Circuit

– **Sardar Patel Zoological Park and Jungle Safari:** The park houses more than 100 species of animals and birds, including wallaby (a macropod related to the kangaroo and found in Australia and New Guinea); llama and alpaca (camelid species native to the Andes of South America); giraffe, zebra, blue wildebeest, gemsbok or oryx, and impala (all native to Africa).

It will be the only safari of its kind in the country with such a wide range of exotic animals. There are two aviaries, constructed as geodesic domes, claimed to be among the largest in the world : The Indian Aviary, The Exotic Aviary

– **Children’s Nutrition Park:** The park is billed as the “world’s first technology driven Nutrition Park”. It will offer a “nutri-train” ride passing through five theme-based stations: “Phalshaka Griham”, “Payonagari”, “Annappoorna”, “Poshan Puram” and “Swastha Bharatam”.

– **The Mirror Maze:** It has a 5D virtual reality (VR) theatre and augmented reality (AR) games to enhance nutritional awareness through entertainment.

– Carnival look:

– Riverfront Cycling Tour

– The Gardens

– The Cruises

– Dynamic lighting on Sardar Sarovar Dam

FUNDING CRISIS FOR UN PEACE BUILDING INITIATIVES

SOURCE - UN WEBSITE

GS PAPER - 3

Context

The COVID-19 pandemic continues its relentless global assault, the UN Secretary-General has urged countries not to let up on their support for peace efforts in conflict-affected countries.

Preventing and averting crises

- The Peacebuilding Commission was established in 2005 with the mandate to bring together all relevant sides to marshal resources and advise on integrated strategies for post-conflict peace building.
- Through the Peace building Fund, the UN responds to and prevents violent conflict by supporting governments and societies.

The ‘persistent challenge’ of funding

- While the Secretary-General underscored the Commission’s leadership in uniting various stakeholders, the meeting sought to address what he labelled the “persistent challenge” of ensuring predictable and adequate financing for peacebuilding efforts.
- The Peacebuilding Fund is seeking \$180 million for this year, and demands are outpacing resources.

Conclusion

Programmatic funding to support mandated peacebuilding activities in peacekeeping settings is essential, especially to ensure their continuation following a mission’s closure,” he continued.

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GURU RAMDAS JI - PARKASH PURAB

Source: PIB

Topic

Personalities in news (culture)

Context

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has greeted the people on the occasion of the Parkash Purab of Sri Guru Ramdas Ji.

Highlights

- He placed a great emphasis on serving others, ending all forms of inequality and discrimination and strived for establishing a harmonious society throughout his life

Guru Ramdas Ji

- Guru Ram Das was the 4th of the 10 Gurus of Sikhism and born on 24 September 1534.
- Guru Ram Das became the Guru of Sikhism in 1574 and served as the Sikh leader until his death in 1581.
- He is also remembered in the Sikh tradition for expanding the manji organization for clerical appointments and donation collections to theologically and economically support the Sikh movement.
- He appointed his own son as his successor, and unlike the first four Gurus who were not related through descent, the fifth through tenth Sikh Gurus were the direct descendants of Ram Das.

thermal energy, humidity, and UV exposure and so on

- Scientists from the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Govt. of India, have fabricated structural colours artificially. The structural colours were produced by deposition of nanorods and
- Thin films of titanium dioxide (TiO₂) on titanium sputtered hard and flexible surfaces utilizing a method known as glancing angle deposition (GLAD) the colours are due to interference phenomenon and can be manipulated by varying thickness and refractive index of the TiO₂ layer.
- Aluminium, nickel, cobalt and copper can be used as an alternative to titanium.
- Although structural colours are stable, the environmental pollutants sit on the surface of the structural colours and redefine the hue. So to maintain the hue, regular cleaning of the surface is needed, which is cumbersome and costly.
- This problem has been solved by making the surface of the colour superhydrophilic, making it a self-cleaning surface.
- (A permanent self-cleaning state (tested up to 1 year) has been obtained with controlled heat treatment at elevated temperatures. Heat treatment at controlled temperatures has also helped in tuning colours and opaqueness of the colours on glasses.)

SELF-CLEANING NON-TOXIC COLOURS

Source- DD News

GS Paper - 3

- Developed by -Self-cleaning non-toxic colours developed by CeNS can brighten up textiles, automobiles, decorations.
- Self-cleaning, nontoxic artificial colours developed by scientists mimicking colouring technique found in nature in peacock feathers, butterfly wings and gem opals may soon brighten up in textiles, automobiles, and decorations.
- Dyes and pigments which we depend on for colouring are not safe for human health and at the same time suffer with stability issues as it degrades with

MISSION SAGAR - II

SOURCE - PIB

GS PAPER- 3

CONTEXT

Indian Naval Ship Airavat reaches Port Sudan as part of 'Mission Sagar-II'

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Indian government is providing assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries to overcome natural calamities and COVID-19 pandemic, and towards the same INS Airavat is carrying a consignment of 100 Tonnes of food aid for the people of Sudan.
- As part of Mission Sagar-II, INS Airavat will deliver food aid to Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea

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MISSION SAGAR 2

- Mission Sagar-II, is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her maritime neighbours and further strengthens the existing bond.
- The Indian Navy is progressing this mission in close coordination with the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs, and other agencies of the Government of India

ARMY AVIATION CORPS

SOURCE - INDIAN EXPRESS

GS PAPER - 3

CONTEXT

The Army Aviation Corps (AAC), the youngest Corps of the Indian Army, celebrated its 35th Corps Day on November 1.

Background

- The origin of the AAC can be traced back to the raising of the Army Aviation wing of the Royal Air Force in India in 1942, and the subsequent formation of the first Indian Air Observation Post in August 1947.
- The Air Observation Post units primarily acted as artillery spotters - which are the elements that help the artillery in directing the fire and also giving air support to ground forces.
- In the wars of 1965 and 1971, the Air Observation Post helicopters played a key role in the battlefields by flying close to the enemy lines and helping ground assets spot targets.

Role and Function

- The main roles played by the AAC choppers are that of reconnaissance, observation, casualty evacuation, essential load drops, combat search and rescue, thus adding an invaluable air dimension to the Army's capabilities.
- The AAC helicopters also participate in Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations in peace times.
- These use information and data points collected from ground and airborne surveillance assets and satellites

- These battle machines, which can perform both observation/recce and attack functions, are an ideal choice for CI-CT operations to tackle difficult terrains, and also avoid ground-based threats like Improvised Explosive Devices and ambushes.

Conclusion

With the motto Suveg and Sudridh (Swift and Sure), the youngest corps of the Indian Army is set to further grow in its tactical importance in the battlefield. Serving officers and veterans from the Corps say that the corps will need a stronger push of modernisation and enhancement of assault capabilities to take further its role of 'force multiplier

PRADHAN MANTRI BHARTIYA JANAUSHDHI PARIYOJANA

Source: PIB

Topic

Government schemes and Initiatives

Context

Union Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers Shri DV Sadananda Gowda held a comprehensive review meeting of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushdhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) in New Delhi on November 3rd.

Highlights

- During the meeting Shri Gowda congratulated BPPI Team for ensuring supply of medicines and other pharma products like masks to people at affordable rates during difficult times of covid-19.
- PMBJP has achieved sales of Rs 358 crores (as against sale of Rs 433 crore in FY 2019) worth of pharma products through 6600 Jan Aushadhi stores during first seven months of this fiscal (up to Oct 31st), and is likely to surpass sales of Rs 600 crore for entire fiscal year.

About the scheme

- Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushdhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) is a campaign launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses.
- PMBJP stores have been set up to provide generic drugs, which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

- It was launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals in November 2008 under the name Jan Aushadi Campaign.
- Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI) is the implementation agency for PMBJP.
- **Vision:** To bring down the healthcare budget of every citizen of India through providing Quality generic Medicines at Affordable Prices.

Mission:

1. Create awareness among the public regarding generic medicines.
 2. Create demand for generic medicines through medical practitioners.
 3. Create awareness through education and awareness program that high price need not be synonymous with high quality.
 4. Provide all the commonly used generic medicines covering all the therapeutic groups.
 5. Provide all the related health care products too under the scheme.
- **Objective:** Making quality medicines available at affordable prices for all, particularly the poor and disadvantaged, through exclusive outlets "Jan Aushadi Medical Store", so as to reduce out of pocket expenses in healthcare.

MALABAR EXERCISE

Source- Indian Express



Context

Phase 1 of the Malabar Naval Exercise kicks off on Tuesday, with participation of Australian navy for the first time since 2007. A look at what the exercise is about, and why it is particularly significant this year.

What is Malabar Exercise?

It is a multilateral naval exercise that includes simulated war games and combat manoeuvres. It started in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between the Indian and US navies. Japan joined in 2015. This year the exercise will be held in two phases, the first from Tuesday off the coast near Visakhapatnam, and the second in the Arabian Sea in mid-November. Last year it was held in early September off the coast of Japan.

This year's Malabar Exercise has been planned on a "non-contact-at sea" format keeping Covid-19 protocols in mind.

What is the difference this year?

For the first time in over a decade, the exercise will see the participation of all four Quad countries. This will be the second time Australia will participate. In 2007, there were two Malabar Exercises. The first was held off Okinawa island of Japan in the Western Pacific — the first time the exercise was held away from Indian shores — and the second in September 2007, off Visakhapatnam, with the Indian, Japanese, US, Australian and Singapore navies.

The following year, Australia stopped participating. Japan became a regular participant only in 2015, making it a trilateral annual exercise since then.

Why is Australia's participation important?

As the standoff in eastern Ladakh continues, the participation of four large navies from the Indo-Pacific region will send a message to China. Sources have mentioned that earlier, it was the possibility of riling up China that had prevented India from expanding the Malabar Exercise, and from Australia joining it.

NCAER REPORT

CONTEXT

The NCAER report was released by the Union Minister of Science and Technology, Health and Family Welfare and Earth Sciences

NCAER (National Council of Applied Economic Research) -It is an independent, not for profit, economic policy research and think tank based in New Delhi.

EDEN IAS - Educational Development & Enrichment Network

Highlights of the report

- India's investment of nearly 1,000 Crores in the National Monsoon Mission and High-Performance Computing (HPC) facilities would provide benefits worth rupees 50 thousand Crores to nearly 1.07 Crore below poverty line (BPL) agricultural households and 53 Lakh BPL fisher-folk households in the country
- A total of 173 districts (of the total 732 districts in India) across 16 states (of the total 29) were considered for the study to appropriately represent agro-climatic zones, rain-fed areas, coverage of major crops, and incidence of extreme weather events in the country.
- It also assessed economic benefits to the agriculture-related womenfolk of the country. Women play an important role in various agriculture activities, for example, in the fisheries sector, they support finance, supplies and sourcing, staff management, and marketing.
- They handle the customer base and enhance it, keep track of prices, nets, and other fishing assets.
- Realizing the importance of weather predictions to women, NCAER estimated benefits of nearly 13 thousand Crore rupees to women alone, which is 26 percent of the total benefit provided by the national monsoon mission and high-performance computing facilities.
- The survey also revealed that every woman from a fishing household included in the survey wanted to know the ocean state forecast provided by the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) through messaging services on an everyday basis.

NATIONAL MONSOON MISSION

- The National Monsoon Mission was launched by MoES in 2012 with an aim to develop a state-of-the-art, dynamic monsoon prediction system for short, medium, and long-range forecasts.
- The augmentation of the National Monsoon Mission with High-performance Computing facilities has helped the country in achieving a paradigm shift in weather and climate modeling for operational weather forecasts.

SOURCE - PIB

EMPLOYEE STATE INSURANCE CORPORATION (ESIC)

CONTEXT

Recently "Vigilance Awareness Week" was observed at Hqrs. Office, Delhi and Field offices /Hospitals of ESI Corporation located throughout the country with enthusiasm by organising various programmes and activities to create awareness amongst the stakeholders and the public regarding vigilance activities being undertaken by the ESIC for the public good.

Theme - "Vigilant India, Prosperous India (वैजयन्त इंडिया, प्रसन्न इंडिया)".

ABOUT

- Employees' State Insurance (abbreviated as ESI) is a self-financing social security and health insurance scheme for Indian workers.
- The fund is managed by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) according to rules and regulations stipulated in the ESI Act 1948.
- ESIC is a Statutory and autonomous Body
- Administrative Ministry is Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

Employee State Insurance Act

- As it is a legal entity, the corporation can raise loans and take measures for discharging such loans with the prior sanction of the central government and it can acquire both movable and immovable property and all incomes from the property shall vest with the corporation.
- The corporation can set up hospitals either independently or in collaboration with state government or other private entities, but most of the dispensaries and hospitals are run by concerned state governments.

SOURCE - PIB

PM STREET VENDORS ATMANIRBHAR NIDHI (PM SVANIDHI)

Who?

→ Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs launched , to empower Street Vendors by not only extending loans to them, but also for their holistic development and economic upliftment.

Objective:

→ The scheme intends to facilitate collateral free working capital loans of up to INR10,000/- of one-year tenure, to approximately 50 lakh street vendors, to help resume their businesses in the urban areas, including surrounding peri-urban/rural areas.

Eligibility Criteria:

The PM SVANidhi scheme is available to all street vendors who are engaged in vending in urban areas as on or before March 24, 2020. The eligible vendors are identified as per following criteria:

- Street vendors in possession of Certificate of Vending/ Identity Card issued by Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)
- The vendors, who have been identified in the survey but have not been issued Certificate of Vending/Identity Card; Provisional Certificate of Vending would be generated for such vendors through an IT based Platform. ULBs are encouraged to issue such vendors the permanent Certificate of Vending and Identification Card immediately and positively within a period of one month
- Street Vendors, left out of the ULBled identification survey or who have started vending after completion of the survey and have been issued Letter of Recommendation (LoR) to that effect by the ULB/Town Vending Committee (TVC)
- The vendors of surrounding development/peri-urban/ rural areas vending in the geographical limits of the ULBs and have been issued Letter of Recommendation (LoR) to that effect by the ULB/TVC.

Benefits:

The PM SVANidhi scheme offers incentives in the form of:

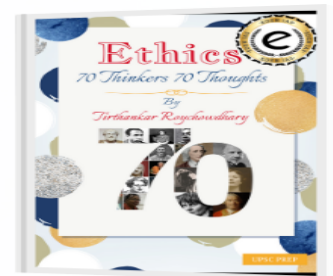
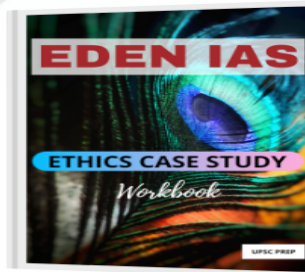
- interest subsidy @ 7% per annum on regular repayment of loan
- cashback upto INR1200/- per annum on undertaking prescribed digital transactions

Source: india.gov.in/DD News

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